

8410 d 27

RATIONAL SELF-LOVE;

OR, A

Philosophical and Moral Essay

ON THE

NATURAL PRINCIPLES

OF

HAPPINESS AND VIRTUE:

WITH

REFLECTIONS ON the various SYSTEMS of
PHILOSOPHERS, Ancient and Modern, on
this SUBJECT.

By L. N.

SELF-LOVE and REASON to one End aspire;
Pain their Aversion, Pleasure their Desire:
But greedy *That* it's Object would devour;
This taste the Honey, and not wound the Flower:
PLEASURE, or wrong, or rightly understood,
Our greatest EVIL, or our greatest Good.

Essay on Man.

LONDON;

Printed for W. GRIFFIN, in Catharine-Street, Strand,

MDCCLXXIII.

4



INTRODUCTION.

IN the specimen which has been given of this work *, it was announced merely as a philosophical amusement; and the Author has religiously kept his word with the public. But as every thing that has relation to the feelings of the soul, and the œconomy of the human sentiments, is always interesting, this species of amusement, if conducted with judgment, must be as useful as pleasing.

BUT this is not without its difficulty.-- In matters of this delicate nature, the writer must be constantly on his guard. One single mistake, in the establishing of a principle, necessarily draws on a train of false illations, and vitiates the whole reasoning: again, an expression a little bold, or which may appear too general and indefinite, displeases the severe critic; who in a work of this nature, requires every where the strictest logical exactness, and will permit nothing to the imagination.--How difficult, in such circumstances, the task of a writer!

* Published some years ago in Ireland.

iv INTRODUCTION.

BUT what! (will some other object) a panegyric on Self-Love?--This is new and paradoxical.--It is even dangerous.--And what, after all, can be said of a principle like this, but that it is the source of all *evil* and parent of every *folly*?---The theme may be pleasing enough to the coquettes and coxcombs of the age;--but what subject this for the more serious part of mankind?

THIS is the substance of the difficulties and objections, that have been made to the design of this work.--But I hope I shall be able to clear them all up to the satisfaction of every candid reader.

IT was not the love of paradox, or a passion for singularity, that induced me to take up this idea: but a desire of placing a very ancient and respectable truth in a new light; and recommending it, by this means, to the attention of persons, who from a more liberal, or fashionable habit of reading, cannot be supposed to be altogether in love with the language of the schoolmen; or to find any great charms in the thorny paths of ethic discipline. If this enquiry should be therefore found to clear up some very abstruse and difficult points of speculation, and establish morality on a plain, but sure and unshaken footing,

INTRODUCTION. ▼

I cannot think there will be any reasonable objection made either to the subject I have taken up, or the method I have here adopted.

BUT it will be again asked--Does morality stand in need of further, or clearer proofs? ---I should be very sorry to think it did: I know it does not; and the poor savage, who never heard the name of Aristotle or Plato mentioned, is yet convinced, by the secret voice of sentiment, of this general truth. But I must beg leave to say, that the philosophers have, many of them, strangely perplexed this matter; and, by labouring at proofs which were not in nature, defaced fair Nature's work, and given occasion to the libertines and free-thinkers of every age to deride even these fundamental and primitive truths.--Let us forget for a moment the philosophers, and their systems; let us consult simple Nature, and listen attentively to her voice: she will tell us, that

HUMANITY partakes equally of sensibility and reason--that it is essentially a compound of both--that we are affected with pain and pleasure, before we are capable of distinguishing between moral good and evil--and that, even after being made acquainted with these distinctions, it

vi INTRODUCTION.

is not in our power to incline to the one side or the other, without some immediate and pleasing motive to engage us to action.

THIS process is extremely simple and easy : and I conceive that upon this plain and simple foundation, we may see the august and venerable fabrick of morality rise with infinitely greater dignity and security, than it can receive from all the laboured speculations of the philosophers. ---The judicious reader will not fail to observe, that here we have reason always in our view ; and when he reflects on all that this idea imports (the existence of a Deity, the superintendence of a Providence, and our innate desire of happiness and immortality) he will then the better conceive the propriety of the title of this work "Rational Self-Love."

With great respect to the learned schoolmen, and the illustrious names of Clarke, Woollaston, &c. I must be bold to say, that they have not been sufficiently explicit and satisfactory in their reasonings on this important subject.

WHAT should we think of a mathematician, who, in explaining the use and nature of the globe, should content himself with telling us, that the sun rises and sets to our view once in the four and twenty

INTRODUCTION. vii

hours, because the nature of things requires it should be so ; or because this regulation is conformable to the eternal and invariable connexion of our ideas ; or even because the Creator hath ordained this regular vicissitude and order in nature ?--- What information or satisfaction could we receive from such vague and general expressions ? and would not the curious enquirer remain still totally ignorant of the true system of the globe ? &c.

Nor unlike this is the method the above mentioned philosophers have followed in accounting for the first principles of virtue.---Virtue and the moral principle is (we all agree) strictly conformable to truth, to the nature of things, to the will of God, &c.--Who doubts it ? But what is it that makes it thus perfectly conformable to truth and the nature of things ?--- What gives virtue the denomination of truth ; and vice, that of falshood ?---And what is it, which induces the Deity to command the one, and forbid the other ?--- Here it is in two words:--the property, and immediate tendency, of virtue is to produce general happiness ; that of vice, general misery.---This is that plain truth, about which the generality of our speculative philosophers (my Lord Shaftesbury, and

viii INTRODUCTION.

all the modern Platonists not excepted) have formed so many profound, but mysterious, unintelligible, or inconclusive reasonings; and this the precise point, into which all that pomp of words, to have any real meaning, must be ultimately resolved. Now it is to be observed, that general happiness imports our own, as well as that of others; and, that the happiness of others, exclusive of our own, had been quite indifferent and foreign to us: our own good and happiness, therefore, in some sense or other, is always the first object of our pursuit; and this is the grand spring which Providence sets in motion to engage the attention of individuals to the great object of the general good. It is true, the ultimate end of all is God's glory, as we shall shew in chap. 3 of this work; but this is necessarily implied in the general idea, and a love of *virtue* itself.

THE design, therefore, of this work, is to illustrate and set forth these important truths in the strongest light we are able: the more, as certain modern philosophers seem to have taken advantage of the insufficiency of the common method of reasoning on these matters, in order to obtrude on the human race the most pernicious systems and principles, and such as

INTRODUCTION. ix

tend directly to annihilate the eternal distinction of right and wrong, of virtue and vice; and stifle, in a word, the voice of all conscience and religion.

If you would believe these modern sages, morality is but a nominal system; and virtue a principle of mere immediate convenience: our notions, therefore, of *right* and *wrong* are essentially variable, and to be determined only by opinion, and the various tastes of nations and ages. Upon this principle Dr. Mandeville compares "the maxims of morality to the different ways of laying out a garden judiciously; which are almost innumerable, and vary, according to the different tastes of nations and ages."--- "The actions which one nation or age approves and recommends as *virtuous*, another nation or age (he observes) treats as *vicious* and abominable." "Our notions, therefore, of *right* and *wrong*, are merely arbitrary, and as variable as the modes and fashions, which come and go in endless rotation."---The consequence of this hopeful scheme of reasoning is, that there is nothing permanent in the sentiment of *virtue*, and that *conscience* itself, in the sense we commonly understand it, is an

x INTRODUCTION.

imposition on mankind, and an open insult offered to our *reason*.

MANY of our modern reasoners think in the same manner ; of all of whom we may truly say, what the judicious Dr. Brown has particularly observed (in his *Treatise on Liberty and Licentiousness*,) of a celebrated writer yet living ; that, “ with
“ a pen truly Epicurean they would at once
“ dissolve all the comforts of the just, the
“ hopes of the virtuous, and the terrors
“ of the impious.”

It may be justly asked, what could have given rise, among the modern philosophers, to speculations so contradictory to the precious lights derived to us from Christianity ; and even the more general system of the heathen philosophers ? “ The
“ corruption of the heart (it will be
“ answered) and a sullen attachment to the
“ objects, and immediate pleasures, of sense,
“ joined to a restless itch of novelty, and
“ singularity in opinion.”---Such dispositions must, I own, have put the mind upon the search after arguments and reasons, capable of giving this scheme an air at least of plausibility. But what in short, are those arguments and plausible reasons, on which the philosophers of our days

INTRODUCTION. xi

have imagined they could erect a system so pernicious ?

THEY may, I think, be all reduced to this one general principle, ill applied, and misunderstood ; viz. the influence of Self-Love in all our determinations and actions. ---From this principle, which, as we shall see, is in itself incontestable, they have very earnestly laboured to draw conclusions the most unfavourable to *morality*, and indeed the most erroneous. These we have just hinted to, and shall think our labour not ill employed, if we are so happy as to succeed in our attempt to expose the enormous abuse of their deductions and reasonings.

THERE is in Monsieur Pascal's Thoughts a remark very pertinent to the present purpose, " If we would reprove (says he) with success, and effectually shew another that he is in the wrong, we ought to observe what way he is looking upon the object, (because in that sense it is generally such as he apprehends it) and acknowledge that he is so far in the right.--- He will be pleased with this method ; as intimating that he was not mistaken, but only wanted to have surveyed the thing on all sides."

AND why should we not employ the

xii INTRODUCTION.

same method, so full of candour and moderation, in the cause we have now before us; the most interesting perhaps in the whole course of human speculation, and that which most nearly concerns the happiness of our species? The modern reasoners have set out with this principle; that the love of ourselves, or Self-Love (for they mean the same thing) is the first and universal spring of action in man.---If this principle is really founded in truth and the nature of things, must we deny it merely because they have adopted it; or, if you will, because they have attempted to draw wrong inferences from it?--That were equally unjust and unphilosophical;--for what principle would then hold good in philosophy; or what principle is there, however true and respectable in itself, which some of the philosophers have not misapplied and perverted?--“ Nil tam absurdum (says Tully) quod non dixerit aliquis philosophorum.”--As the principle, therefore, is just, and founded in nature, we cannot refuse subscribing to it; but they must in their turn permit us to shew the wrong and intolerable abuse of the reasonings which they have attempted to establish on this foundation.

We are not, perhaps, sufficiently aware

INTRODUCTION. xlii

of the danger of these seducing opinions; how softly they glide into the soul, and assume, in a little time, the appearance of reason. How far they may have obtained in these nations, I shall not take upon me to determine: but certain it is, that many seem now to estimate *virtue* by the sole rule of immediate convenience; and *vice* by the deviation of their actions from this favourite scheme, or perhaps by the nature of the penalty, attached by the mere letter of our laws to certain irregularities and transgressions.

HENCE the general disrepute into which *morality* is fallen among us!--The private virtues, stripped by this graceless philosophy of their strongest support (the religious motive) lie neglected, or are laughed out of countenance: the ruin of public virtue necessarily follows; for both are intimately connected: nay, the latter derives all its force and efficacy from the former. If not animated by this original spirit, the intrepidity of the hero is but ferocity or wild ambition; and all the boasted zeal of the patriot, but a narrow and contemptible selfishness.

SUCH the abuse to which Self-Love lies exposed! and such, in fact, the abuse, which is daily made of it both in specula-

xiv INTRODUCTION.

tion and practice!--A diligent and honest enquiry into the nature of this principle, will therefore, it is hoped, appear not altogether unseasonable or unentertaining to the reader: It will open to the candid reader, at least, a more pleasing prospect; and help to dissipate the clouds, which writings of this stamp, or the conversation of men abandoned to this loose and dangerous way of thinking, may have raised in the mind.

THE few, among the ancient philosophers, who denied the immortality of the soul, and the superintendence of a Providence, confined the idea of happiness to the blessings of this life; nor could their Self-Love, consistently with these wretched and narrow views, extend any farther.---Epicurus distinguished himself among the philosophers of this stamp, and first reduced these notions into a systematical form. The famous Latin poet, Lucretius, brought the doctrines of this Greek philosopher into vogue in Rome; and in his poem, "de Rerum Natura", a work replete with impiety and beauty, presented the intoxicating cup to the mistress of the world. Cæsar tasted, and drank deep of the delicious poison; and in the drunkenness of his reason, despised the gods, and trampled on the liberties of his country.

INTRODUCTION. xv

THE first among the moderns, who treated of Self-Love with elegance and discernment, was the Duke de la Rochefoucault; whose ingenious maxims are a lasting monument of his extensive knowledge of men and manners. It were happy that those who came after him, and took up the same subject, had prescribed to themselves the same rules of moderation, and liberal criticism: he paints men, and the actions of men, as he found them, and as they generally are; but he meddled not with principle, and shewed no inclination to attack the ground-work of moral sentiment, which he evidently supposes all along; and seems to judge of the actions of men, and determine their merit, by the relation they stand in to this primitive rule. He has, however, been followed by a train of malignant wits, such as the authors of the *Pensées Philosophiques**, *L'homme Machine*, † *L'esprit*, ‡ &c. whose inauspicious labours, like the spider's web, seem calculated only for the poor and unmanly purpose of ensnaring flies; and, taking advantage of the natural curiosity of men to be-

(1) *Philosophical Thoughts*.—as supposed, by Mons. Didot.

(2) *Man a Machine*.—by the Marquis D'Argens.

(3) *Spirit*.—by Mons. Helvetius.

xvi INTRODUCTION.

tray them into the pernicious schemes of irreligion, or modern Epicureism.--Rochefoucault wrote more like a gentleman (or, if you will, a critic) than a philosopher.

THE unhappy Mr. Hobbes, who built all his moral reasonings on the same foundation, was a professed philosopher: but his mind had received a deep tincture of melancholy; and his temper had been soured, to an uncommon degree, by the fanaticism and unbounded audacity of the times, when he saw the constitution overturned, and the king, under the pretext of public justice, dragged upon a scaffold.---Hobbes then concluded in his cabinet, that "All men are born in a hostile state,"---that "each one is to every other a wolf, and a beast of prey;" and that "superiority of power and address is the only rule of right," &c. This needs no comment; and the abuse of the principle of Self-Love is here so glaring and excessive, that we have only to wonder how a writer could have the audacity to publish such monstrous reveries.--Mandeville is more circumspect and popular: but his writings have the same general tendency to overthrow morality, to confound the ideas of *virtue* and *vice*, and annihilate their distinction.--The author of certain cele-

I N T R O D U C T I O N. xvii

brated essays, who is yet living, has laid himself open to the same invidious charge.

It is then a matter of some importance to take a view of these original principles; and present them, in their natural order, to the curious enquirer. If the Author's endeavours should not please generally, he will have at least the conscious satisfaction of having meant well; and taken some uncommon pains, to collect the necessarily materials of a rational amusement for his readers. He hopes, therefore, for that candour and indulgence from the Public, which every well meaning writer is entitled to.

To obviate or prevent any misapprehension on the part of the Reader, he thinks himself here obliged to observe, that when he talks of the natural principles of *virtue*, he does not mean to abstract from the lights conveyed to us by Divine Revelation; or that human nature is of itself capable of doing any thing meritorious of life everlasting, without the immediate assistance of Divine and Supernatural *grace*. In chap. 7 of this work, the Reader will see this mentioned expressly; and the Author must look upon any supposition to the contrary, as injurious to him.--It is Divine Revelation alone that has cleared up all our doubts in

xviii INTRODUCTION.

these matters ; that brought to light all the errors of the philosophers; and distinctly pointed out the object, motive, rule, and true end of morality and virtue. Nor can we conceive how Socrates and Plato could have spoken so divinely, and said things so extraordinary and sublime, without some insight into the Oracle of God, by whatever means they obtained it, which it is not my business here to enquire. But even these great men seem to speak on occasions with some doubt and vacillation ; because the glory of a perfect revelation was reserved for the great Messiah and Master of the World. On this score it is, that our Deists have been so often, and, so justly reproached with insincerity and ingratitude, in assuming to themselves the merit of those distinct and forcible reasonings, which we find in some of their books, on the subject of natural religion : for the most part of what they have been able to say with certainty on that subject, has been clearly taken from revelation.

How then can we call those principles and maxims of *morality*, which have escaped the penetration of the philosophers of all ages, *natural* ; or pretend that they are founded in nature ?--For this reason ; that they are really conformable to the

INTRODUCTION. xix

true and original sentiments of rational nature, which had been obscured, disfigured, and in a great measure effaced by SIN ; but happily revived, and brought again into full day, by the Christian Revelation.

I SHALL make no apology here for employing the term of “ the Gods ” in many places of this work : every body, that has the slightest tincture of classical learning, must know, that this term is made use of, without the least scruple, by all who treat of the history or morality of the ancients ; and that it means no more, in the modern stile, than the truth of the existence of a Deity, and a Supreme Providence.

ALL the sources from which I have drawn any help in this composition, are faithfully pointed out in the work itself. But I must particularly acknowledge my obligations to the judicious Dr. Brown, in his Essays on the Characteristics, particularly Essay II, “ On the obligations of man to virtue, and the necessity of religious principle.” A piece truly philosophical, and which I should heartily recommend to the perusal of all our modern reasoners.

INTRODUCTION

the and original sentiments of the
nature which had been obscured, dis-
torted, and in a great measure effaced by
happily revived, and brought
forth by the Christian Revolution
I shall make no apology
employing the term of "the
many places of this work: every body
that has the slightest notion of classical
learning, must know that this term is
made use of without the least impropriety,
all who want of the history or metaphysics of
the ancients; and that it means no more,
in the modern sense, than the truth of the
existence of a Deity, and a Supreme Pro-

All the sources from which I have
drawn any help in this composition, are
kindly pointed out in the work itself.
But I must particularly acknowledge my
obligations to the ingenious Dr. Brown, in
his essays on the Characteristics, particu-
larly Essay II, "On the obligations of man
to virtue, and the necessity of religion."
A piece truly philosophical,
and which I should heartily recommend to
the perusal of all our readers.

RATIONAL SELF-LOVE

&c. &c.

CHAP. I.

*Self-love philosophically considered.---Innate
love and desire of happiness.---The passions.---
Source and origin of all these affections.*

WITH all the disadvantages under which human nature is acknowledged to labour, we still feel something within us that animates our hope, and rouses the soul to action. Men of the most thoughtless cast of mind, men even in the rudest state of cultivation, have a general, and often a lively sense of their essential wants: all sigh without intermission for something, they know not what, that may at length fill up the vacuity of their souls, and make them happy and easy.

WHAT shall we call this disposition of the mind? Call it *restlessness, solicitude, ca-*

capacity of the *soul*, or whatever other appellation you please to give it; but sure I am it is *Self-love*: that is, a principle of self-preservation implanted originally in our nature, and which manifests itself in perpetual efforts towards the general object of our well-being, and a constant desire of improving, one way or other, our condition.

It is not enough, perhaps, to call this a principle of *self-preservation*; it is something more: it implies a certain greatness of soul, which will not acquiesce in simple existence, but aspires to a more extensive plan of sentiment, and action. In a word it may be defined---An *internal* spring of action, which puts all human nature in motion, and, according to the different direction it receives from the free determinations of our will, becomes occasionally the instrument of *good* and *evil*, and of what we truly call *virtue*, and *vice*.---Of *virtue*, when directed to the attainment of all the *good*, which in such circumstances may be attained; and of *vice*, when diverted from the prosecution of that greater good, to pursuits of a meaner sort, and *subversive* of that better end.

THIS is the true philosophical idea of *Self-love*. In the common acceptation indeed, it is understood to mean such affec-

tions and dispositions only, as are known to center in the gratification of *destructive* passions : but this is confining a term of a very extensive meaning, to too narrow and limited a sense ; and in this particular acceptance it falls by the one half short of the idea it naturally imports. In this last sense it is an *evil*, which man had wantonly fabricated for himself ; in that which we have delivered, it is a principle of *good* and *happiness*, consequently a blessing, and a gift of God.

SELF-LOVE, thus philosophically understood, is to human nature what the *gale* is to the *navigator*, a *force* or *impulse*, which bears us on through life ; and without the help of which man must have languished in a state of inaction, and inutility to himself and the world. It is the source and fountain-spring of all those affections and passions, which animate and diversify, in an infinite variety of operation, the vast theatre of human life.

WHAT idea of a man without affections, appetites or desires, that is, without *Self-love* ? How should we distinguish him, in that supposition, from a painted *canvas*, or *statue* of senseless block ? These affections, it is true, varied and opposite as they always are, keep up a kind of warfare in the soul,

and hold the mind in a state of perpetual agitation: but---

All things subsist by elemental *strife*,
And *passions* are the elements of life.

Essay on Man.

IN fact, what can be more opposite than those external elements, which compose the bulk of our world, *air, earth, fire* and *water*? And yet what harmony, what beauty arises from their general accord!

THE analogy will appear still fuller and more striking to the reader, when he compares the action of *Self-love* on the soul, with that impulse, or force which sets the *planetary* system in motion.

BY this last are produced all those charming *phenomena* (or appearances) in the heavens, which strike the eye of every beholder with admiration, the vicissitudes of *day* and *night*; the revolution of the *seasons*; variations of the *moon*, &c. and sometimes fierce, and dreadful *phenomena*, as *thunder, lightning, comets*, &c.

SIMILAR to these are the effects and appearances which *Self-love* produces in the *human* system; sometimes flowing in a calm and gentle succession of *action* and *repose*; now blazing in a glow of *benevolence*, and *heroic* sentiments; or again raging in a *storm* of the fiercer passions.

BUT whence does this powerful *instinct* derive its origin and source?

IT manifestly arises from our *sensibility*, and power of *feeling*. For, how possess this power, or once experience the impressions of *pain* and *pleasure*, and not *desire* the one, and *dread* the other?---From this natural love of what is in itself grateful to the sense, and our aversion to what is painful, we are justly said to *love ourselves*; because we are the subject in which these impressions are received, and for whose sake Nature exerts herself so strenuously to secure and improve the one, and remove or assuage the other.

OBSERVE the progression of Nature's operations in a new-born infant.---Weak, naked, and defenceless on his first entrance into the world, he sensibly feels the impression of the external air, and manifests his suffering by his piercing cries.---But as *pain* is not our destination in the Creator's view, it seems to have been calculated, in this instance, to prepare the way for a succeeding sensation of *pleasure*.

IN effect, so soon as the tender hand of the parent can, with proper applications, remove the cold (which was the cause of the infant's *pain*) the scene is immediately altered; the blood having by this means

acquired a quicker degree of motion, a new and till then unknown warmth is immediately diffused through the little frame, and to a state of *trouble* and *anguish*, instantly succeeds *serenity* and *joy*.---Every subsequent movement of the infant, manifestly tends to secure, and if possible, perpetuate this pleasing situation, and to avoid or prevent the return of *pain*.

THIS is visibly the affection of *Self-love*. But what is it, which gave existence to, or roused this latent power of the soul?---What indeed but the sensation of *pain*, which so greatly incommodes, and that of *pleasure*, which in its turn comforts and revives the infant being?

THUS *Self-love* is visibly the result, or if you will, the inseparable concomitant of our *sensibility*. It is also a necessary principle of our *preservation*: a point much more interesting, and which requires a separate explanation.

C H A P. II.

Self-love a necessary principle of our preservation in every stage of life.--- Wisdom of Providence in the œconomy of the animal system. --- Reason alone not sufficient to this end --- Effects of the union of Reason and Self-love in man.

WE are still talking of man, considered as an *individual*. We shall consider him hereafter as a member of *society*. In the first place, therefore, it is a principle indubitable, that *Self-love* is absolutely necessary to our preservation, as *individuals* not only in the days of infancy, but also in our riper years.

If *infants* had not this internal spring to determine them to action, they could not possibly subsist, but must inevitably perish. What should direct them in the choice of necessary and wholesome *food*? What should deter them from the use of such things, as may be hurtful and destructive? They have not yet attained the use of *reason*; they are incapable of perceiving the connexion of causes with their natural effects; some *instinct*, therefore, must have been substituted in the place of *reason* to

supply this deficiency ; and this instinct is *Self-love*.

UPON this principle, and with this view it was, that the Author of nature kindly annexed to the use of such things, as are necessary or conducive to the *infant's* support, a certain *delightful* sensation, which naturally draws his attention that way ; and a *painful* and *forbidding* one to every thing that may be pernicious, or hurtful, as a preservative against their fatal effects.--- The balmy suck that bedews his tender lips, is as *sweet* to the taste, as it is *salutary* to his frame : on the other hand, strong or acid *liquors*, which are destructive to the constitution, are in an equal degree *offensive* to his palate.---Thus has the Creator provided against the dangers, that threaten our infancy, by means the most simple and easy, and withal the most effectual ; that is, by the immediate operation of *Self-love*.

THE tender care and experience of the parent would, it may be said, sufficiently answer all these purposes, without supposing *Providence* to interfere in this particular manner. No : all the skill and tenderness of parents would avail nothing towards this desirable end, if the food, which they present to the infant, were not still more powerfully recommended by a con-

comitant sense of *pleasure*, attached by nature to the use of the thing itself. Without this lure, which Providence holds out to the infant, he would obstinately reject all their most tender offices, and nauseate even the most necessary food.

THIS, at the same time that it shews the necessity of *Self-love* towards the infant's *preservation*, is a clear demonstration of a Supreme *Providence*, infinitely *wise* and *good*. And indeed, what can be more admirable than this exact proportion of *means* to their proper *ends*, so visibly displayed in the œconomy of this *animal* system?--- But this brings back to my memory a particular objection of the *Epicurians* against the doctrine of *providence*.

“THERE are some kinds of *poison*, said they, which are *sweet* and *pleasing* to the palate; whilst other things, that greatly contribute to the support or recovery of health, are *nauseous* and *dis tasteful*.”

FROM this, and some other seeming deviations and irregularities in the constitution or operations of nature, *Lucretius* had the impiety to advance, That the DEITY could have had no part in the original creation, or present administration, of the world:

*Nequaquam nobis Divinitus esse paratam
Naturam rerum, quæ tanta est prædita culpa!*

Lucr. L. 5.

FOR a full and satisfactory answer to the difficulties, or rather cavils, of the enemies of *providence*, I must here refer the reader to the illustrious *Fenelon's* Demonstration of the *Existence* of God, the learned *Derham's Physico* and *Astro-Theology*, and Cardinal *Polignac's Anti Lucretius*. Of these three celebrated writers, the two first are the most familiar, and best accommodated to every capacity.

THESE works contain a simple recital, or review, of the wonders of nature, of what is most striking to the naked eye, or interesting to the curious naturalist. The *Speſtacle de la Nature* of Monsieur *L'Abbe Pluche* is also a work of great merit in this way.

THESE simple reviews of the productions of Nature, contain a magnificent display of the power and wisdom of God, more convincing perhaps, and satisfactory to the mind, than all the arguments deduced from the laboured speculations of philosophy.

BUT not to pass by, unanswered, the objection of the *Epicureans* above mentioned, I must here observe, that it is by

art alone that *poisons* are made properly *sweet* and palatable : for it is remarkable, that the sweetish quality, which some kinds of *poisons* have from nature, is rather heavy and loathsome, than lively or inviting ; and that such things, if not swallowed precipitately, will quickly shock and offend the palate.

EVEN the vermin, after greedily swallowing a little arsenic, disguised in bread, or other meat, will, when next it meets a like preparation, carefully separate the good food from the *poison*, and avoid the latter.

WHAT can the instinct, which teaches it this nice distinction, be founded upon, but the *disagreeable taste*, or *smell*, produced by the *poison* itself ? For there is no *antipathy*, or *sympathy* in nature without its immediate cause ; and no other sufficient cause appears for the *antipathy* here mentioned, but that which we have assigned.

THE infant's organs, it is true, are not yet properly fitted or matured for these nice distinctions, in all things : he is even often seen to catch at things, that are *hurtful* and *destructive* ; and the young of the *brute* kind, which are not designed for the possession of *reason* at any time, have nevertheless, from the beginning, a per-

fection of *instinct*, which is denied to the *human* species.

BUT what then? or what argument can philosophy draw from this, that may in the least prejudice the adorable doctrine of an allwise and bounteous *Providence*? or even the truth of the principle, which we have just laid down; *viz.* that the Creator has annexed to the use of good and wholesome food a certain *delightful* sensation, to excite and renew, at stated times, our love and desire of it?

HAVE infants the same regular and periodical fondness for what is *hurtful*, or even *indifferent* in its nature, that they have for *good* and *wholesome* food? No. The latter is, therefore, a manifest instinct of Nature, which, if not prevented by sickness or infirmity, always operates in an uniform manner on the human frame, and was consequently given us for the end of our preservation; and the deviations from this grand rule, arising from some irregular and unnatural appetite, or wantonness of fancy, are but some of the effects of our natural imperfection and weakness, which kind Providence hath however, in a great measure, secured us against; on the one hand by the experience and tender vigilance of our parents, and on the other by the

difficulty of access, in our infant days, to such destructive objects.

BUT after all, what presumption in man, what blindness in the philosopher, to imagine, that the Creator should not have moulded, as he pleased, the work of his own hands, and interspersed with his *gifts* some necessary correctives to our *pride*!

WHY? says the *difficult* philosopher, why any *poisonous*, or *noxious herbs*, among the *flowers* of the *mead*?---Why any *vora-*
cious or *destructive* animals in the walks of Nature? Are these the vestiges of a *bounteous Providence*?

BUT let this audacious reasoner listen in his turn. Whatever might have been the occasion, whatever the Creator's motive for this remarkable diversity, in the productions of nature, is it not true at the same time, that he hath furnished us with proper means to obviate the inconveniencies and evils, that may arise from such causes?

HAVE not even these very causes, whatever terrifying aspect they may wear, their degrees of *convenience* and *utility* in the general system?

ONE must be extremely dull, or inattentive, not to perceive it. From the

rankest *poisons* are extracted many medicinal virtues, well known to the learned in botany and chemistry. On the other hand, the different species of savage and destructive beasts keep each other in awe, and at a proper distance from man: their ferocity serves to exercise his courage and industry, and gradually becomes matter of sport and amusement to him: he cannot, it is true, boast the strength of the *lion*; but then he has *bands*, and *ability* to furnish these hands with arms and instruments, more terrible than the dilacerating claw, or so much dreaded roar of that voracious animal.

THIS superiority of power and address in the human race was, we may justly suppose, originally calculated for our defence against the ferocity and voraciousness of many of the *brute* creation; and it was the *vice* of man only, that pointed these instruments of death against the breasts of his *fellow-citizens*.

WHEN all therefore is considered, must it not be acknowledged, that the earth, as it actually stands, is habitation *good enough* (as the learned *Derham* expresses it) for its tyrannic masters?

Now for the design, which the Creator might have had, in thus blending and che-

quering (if I may say it) the scene of Nature, let us hear the sublime and eloquent FENELON.

THE *universe* (says he) is one great and admirable piece of divine art, where *light* and *shade* are blended in such a manner, as at once to produce the double effect, which the mighty Artist had in view; *viz.* To make it known, by the *stamp* he impressed it with, as *his*; (that is, by the *beauty*, *variety*, and *grandeur* of the *work*) and still retain certain marks of its *dependency*, and creation out of *nothing*, by some seeming *defects* or *dark* appearances upon the face of this stupendous fabric.

So it is in truth. On the one hand, the grandeur, beauty, and variety of the *universe*, strike the eye of every beholder with amazement; whilst on the other, the irregularities or deviations, which we think we may discern in certain parts of the whole, (those particularly which seem in any shape to affect our *happiness*) are continually pointing out to us the *dependency* of our origin, and the primitive *nothing* of all things around us.

So far we have endeavoured to clear up the first part of the objection above mentioned. As to the second, that there are things which, though greatly conducive

to the support, or preservation of *health* yet are *disasteful* and *forbidding*, (as *emetics*, *purgatives*, and the like) it should be observed, that these things contribute only by *accident* and *indirectly*, to the preservation or recovery of health, inasmuch as they help to remove the internal causes of sickness and disorders, *viz.* the redundant and noxious humours, which sometimes overpower the stomach, and obstruct the vital functions : but, considered *directly* and *immediately* in themselves, they are certainly *hurtful* and *destructive* in a degree equal to the *disagreeableness* of the sensations they excite. They convulse the stomach in an alarming manner, and would prove fatal, were they not expelled along with the noxious humours of the stomach itself, by the very tumult and convulsions which they there give rise to.

FROM this general proportion, which is found to subsist between the nature of things, and the quality of the sensations they naturally excite in us, we must conclude, that an all-wise, and bounteous Providence hath originally directed, and still continues to preside over, the œconomy of the *animal* system in general.

BUT to return to *Self-love*, and the necessity of its concurrence in the work of

our *preservation*: it will be said, that in our riper years, when our *reason* is strengthened and improved, there should appear no occasion, for the purpose here mentioned, of the operation or influence of *Self-love*. Should not this seem to draw *man* to too near a resemblance with the *brute* kind? And is it not *reason*, at this period, equal to the accomplishment of all purposes of human life?-----

No.---The guidance and direction of *reason* is, indeed, absolutely necessary at this period; because then we have a thousand different objects to look too: we must provide the necessaries and conveniences of life, and guard against innumerable evils, which seem to threaten our destruction: we must therefore be endowed with *judgment* and *reason*, to compare our ideas together, to see into the various *connexions* and *bearings*, and weigh their respective degrees of tendency to the production of *good* and *evil*: yet all this is unequal to the accomplishment of the purposes of human life without the additional weight and action of some *instinctive* power, capable of fixing the mind to the great object of our *preservation* and *happiness*.

REASON, taken purely in itself, is nothing more than the *perception* and *contemplation*

of *truth* in its various connexions, and deductions. It was therefore that an eminent writer compared the light of *reason* to that of the sun, which enlightens every thing, but gives motion to none; and carries a *brightness* along with it, but has no *force*.---If man (continues this author) had nothing but *reason* to speak to him, he would consider her decisions, as *dreams*, or the importunate counsels, and remonstrances of a *pedant*.---It is the *sentiment*, or *feeling* of *good*, which alone engages our *regards*; and that of *evil*, which stirs up our *dislike* and *resentment*.---*Abbadie: L'art de se Connoitre Soimeme.*

IN fact, had we not been actuated by some *instinctive* principle, like *Self-love*, our *reason* should have been bewildered in her own *thoughts*; it should have been indifferent to us, what objects we bestowed our contemplations upon: and the mind would perhaps attach itself to every thing else, but that which concerned us most.

SELF-LOVE alone arrests all these vagaries, and fixes and determines the mind to the interesting object of our *happiness*. This principle, therefore, added to that of *reason*, gives us at once the idea of an *active* being, full of *affections*, *appetites*, and *desires*, yet RATIONAL, PROVIDENT, and FREE; and

capable of turning the impetuosity of the *passions* to the noblest purposes of *wisdom*, by gaining them over to the party of *virtue*; in a word, the full idea of *man*.

“ — Self-love, the spring of motion, *acts* the soul,
Reason's comparing ballance *rules* the whole,
Man, but for *that*, no action could attend,
And, but for *this*, were active to *no end*:
Fix'd like a *plant* on his peculiar spot,
To draw nutrition, propagate, and rot;
Or, meteor like, flame *lawless* thro' the void,
Destroying *others*, by *himself* destroy'd.—

ESSAY ON MAN.”

FROM all this it evidently follows, that *Self-love* is as necessary to our preservation, as *reason* itself. What do I say? These two powers make up the substance of man's very essence and nature; nor could we boast the being we enjoy, if either had been excluded.

THERE remains but one thing more to be observed on this head; to say how, and in what our *sentiment*, or modus of *feeling* differs from that of *superior* beings?—Ours therefore is of a mixed kind, founded partly on *sense*, and partly on *reason*; for there is indubitably a species of feeling, which is properly called *sentiment*, and is independent of the impressions made upon our senses by external objects; particularly that sentiment of *Self-love*, which

consists in a *conscious dignity*, or *esteem* of our own *worth*: a source often of the bitterest, though secret, *self-reproach*, when we think we have even mentally admitted or acquiesced in a thought, unbecoming the dignity of our nature; and, on the other hand, of the most flattering *self-applause*, when our sentiments appear equal to the good opinion we have of *ourselves*.

THIS is common to us with superior, and *spiritual* beings; but these are exempt from, and inaccessible to those movements of *self-love*, which take rise in the operation of the *senses*, and the impressions thereon made by *material* objects: thus *avarice*, *voluptuousness*, *indolence*, and the like sensual affections, which make so great a part of the *human* passions, are entirely unknown to these superior beings: their feelings, therefore, are what we properly call pure *sentiment*; ours partly *sentiment*, and partly *sensation*.

SOME of the philosophers have strenuously laboured to perplex themselves and the world with difficulties concerning the powers and merits of *human reason*, that guide, which Providence gave man to direct him in his pursuit of *happiness*. The title of this work, which includes *reason* as well as *Self-love*, seems of itself to call upon

us for a discussion of these matters: but not to interrupt the series of the enquiry which we are now engaged in concerning *Self-love*, it seems more adviseable to reserve what we have to say on that subject, for the conclusion of the work. We shall therefore proceed on our enquiry concerning the operations of *Self-love*; but cannot avoid making previously some remarks on the order, which Nature has established in the succession of *pain* and *pleasure*; the two grand springs by which *Self-love* actuates the soul.

C H A P. III.

Succession of pain and pleasure in the human soul. Various systems of philosophers on this subject.

WE have already observed that *pain* and *pleasure* are the two grand springs, which Nature hath employed to rouse the attention of the soul, and keep our *Self-love* always on the watch for the great end of our preservation. This matter merits some reflections; nor is it possible to form to ourselves a competent idea of

the nature of man, or the primitive constitution of humanity, without entering into a detail of this matter.

“ IF this world (says the proud and discontented philosopher) is the work of an all-*bounteous* Providence, why was *pain* made one of the conditions, on which we were to have been brought into being? Why was it not entirely excluded from the creation? Was it not in the power of this all-*bounteous* Creator to have provided for our happiness and safety, without having recourse to this sad expedient? and is not the present system of things an express contradiction to the attribute of the *Divine goodness*?

THE curiosity of man has gone great lengths on this subject, and produced that capital error of the Manicheans, who, not finding themselves able to reconcile the attribute of God's infinite *goodness* with the permission of *evil* of any kind, had recourse to the impious notion of another *distinct* God, whom they supposed equally powerful with the *good* one, but essentially *bad* and *malignant* in his nature, always counteracting the benevolent designs of the *good principle*, and consequently sole author of every *evil* in the world.

It is not, perhaps, so surprising, that igno-

rant, rash *enthusiasts*, should have given into excesses of this kind: but that Mons. Baile, that elevated genius, that formidable critic, should have undertaken an *apology* for this shocking impiety, and asserted that it was founded on arguments unanswerable to all the power of human reason, is indeed an effort of philosophical *spirit*; I should perhaps of said, *despair*, which can scarce be conceived.

THIS last mentioned point is, however, of too abstruse and complicated a nature, to admit of a full discussion in this Essay. All we shall therefore say to it here, is to lay down some general remarks, which may serve at once to satisfy the reader's curiosity on the questions above proposed, and shew the temerity and falsehood of Baile's assertion.

IN our reasonings upon the nature of man, we are never to forget these three things: *first*, That he is a *created* being, essentially, *dependent*, and *limited* in his nature; *second*, That he is of a *compound* nature, as being made up of *spirit* and *matter*; *third*, That as a *rational* being, capable of acting with deliberation and design, he has been placed here in a state of *probation*, where his *virtue* may be put to a proper test, and an opportunity given him of exercising his *free-will* and *liberty*.

Now as a *created, dependent, and limited* being, man is essentially *imperfect*; and we evidently perceive that we are destitute of various degrees of perfection, which we conceive *possible*, and even see other beings *actually* possessed of.

For though upon the whole, man is really superior to every other *material* being, yet if we compare his *bodily* powers, separately, to those of other animals, we shall find that many of them greatly exceed him. He cannot boast, for instance, the strength of the lion, the agility of the deer, the scent of the hound, or piercing sight of the eagle: and though we should suppose him as *perfect*, as the idea of his nature may require, yet we cannot but perceive this *relative* imperfection in him at least, arising from the comparison we make between him and *superior* beings, or even those of an *inferior* kind, when we consider their powers *separately*.

BUT to drop this *relative* imperfection; since it is undeniable that man is composed in part of a *material* frame, let us consider the *weakness* and *imperfection* which, from this principle, is common to him with all other animals. On this principle alone we shall clearly shew, that he could not have been totally exempt from *pain*; and must

at the same time, admire the wisdom and goodness of God in turning these natural disadvantages into a kind of blessing, and a means of promoting our-happiness.

COMPOSED, therefore, as man is of a *material* frame, must he not be naturally subject to many occasional *indispositions*, and in the course of time to a general *decay* of his faculties and senses, to end at last in a total *dissolution*?-----A slight fever disturbs the whole œconomy of his frame; fire will reduce it to ashes; nor can it be pretended, that this imperfect part of man was by Nature entitled to an exemption from the impression of external causes, or the natural effects of the general laws of motion.

BUT the *superior*, the *better* part of man, which is the *soul*, is (you will say) a pure *spirit*, independent of its nature of the laws of *motion*, and perfectly disengaged from the clog of *matter*.

IT is so, indeed, considered abstractedly in itself: but united, as it is, to the *body*, which it informs, and was destined to animate and direct, it must necessarily feel the impressions received in this *material* fabric, those that tend to its *hurt* and *dissolution*, as well as the others that contribute to its *well-being* and *preservation*. *Alternate pain and pleasure* it is, which apprizes the

soul of what passes in the *body*; nor could the *soul*, if not affected in this manner, naturally provide for the preservation and safety of the latter.

THE *soul*, therefore, in its present state, must be naturally susceptible of *pain*, as well as *pleasure*.

CONSIDERED even in itself, as a pure *spirit*, is it not still a created being, and consequently *limited* and *imperfect*? Is it not, as such, obnoxious to *distress*? Will it not yield, at times, to the irritating sense of it's own *wants*, and it's inability to gratify every fancy, or ambitious affection of a towering *soul*?

MUST not a situation like this, which yet is naturally unavoidable to a created being, bring *anxiety* and *pain*?---Or is it demonstrable, or even probable, that God is from the nature of his *goodness* obliged to invert the order of things, and exempt his creatures from the effects, and natural consequences of their *existence*?---He may indeed condescend to do so; and such, in part, was the gracious privilege, granted our first parents before they sinned.

I HAVE said, *in part*; because it appears that this privilege, great as we may suppose it to have been, did not carry an universal exemption from every kind of *pain* or trou-

ble: for though our first parents were to have been free from *death* and *sickness*, whilst they persevered in the state of innocence, yet it is manifest they had still one *passion* at least, or *temptation* to encounter; and that if this were not attended with some struggle and difficulty, there should have been no degree of merit in the *victory*, in case they had even obtained it.---What do I say? The name of *victory* is an absurdity, where no *struggle* is supposed to intervene.

Was not Eve in a state of real *pain*, whilst she contemplated the *beauty* of the *forbidden fruit*?---That *pain*, and inward *struggle*, which should have established a *merit* in her, had she been willing to encounter it with fortitude, was the occasion of her *disgrace*, because she suffered herself to sink under the temptation, and yielded to it.

Now, if even in a state of *privilege* and *exemption*, such as has been here mentioned, there was still a certain portion of *pain* reserved for *trial* and *probation*, what must it be when that *privilege* is cancelled, and humanity abandoned to all its natural *weakness* and *infirmity*?---This is a state of *trial*, much more severe and difficult than the former: *sickness* and *death* have now

resumed their primitive rights over man, and these he must encounter in their most dreadful appearances with resignation and fortitude.

ADD to this the great difficulty of cultivating and observing the *moral* and *social* virtues, *temperance* and *moderation* in the midst of ardent passions; *justice*, *equity* and *peace*, in the face of *avarice*, *contention* and *tumult*: for such are the natural attendants of a numerous society of beings, like *man*, as he stands now constituted!---Is it then so strange, that *pain* should have found place in the world? Or can the permission thereof be deemed a contradiction to the *Divine goodness*, especially when we have so many reasons to be assured, that our *present* sufferings are meant as means of exercising our *virtue*, and that we are to be *gainers* by them in the end?

I SEE but one way of eluding the force of this reasoning; and that is by supposing, that God had no other view in creating this world but that of barely displaying the attribute of his infinite *goodness*, and rendering his creatures *happy*.

THE idea is, I must own, seducing; but it is not just, or founded in any solid principle of *reason*: for in this supposition, the permission of the least *evil* imaginable

should have involved a contradiction, or, to speak in clearer terms, had been totally impossible, because *subversive* of the *only object* which God should then have had in view ; and because he had it in his power to render his creatures completely *happy* (if such had been his sole design) without the intervention of *pain* of any kind, though we should even suppose it to have been employed only as a *means* of bringing about that desirable end.

THIS was Baile's *grand fort*, and the mighty *sophism*, with which he for some time embarrassed the learned world.

“ GOD, (said he) being in himself infinitely *perfect* and *happy*, it cannot be supposed, that the *Creation* could have added in any sense to his *glory*, or that this could have been the end, or design of bringing any *creature* into being. By the *Creation*, therefore, he could have only meant to manifest his *goodness*, and communicate some degrees of *happiness* to his creatures, in that measure which the exigency of their particular natures should require ; that is, to some *more*, to others *less*: but as to *pain*, or *evil* of any sort, it must have been entirely excluded from this pure scheme of *benevolence* and *goodness*.---We see, nevertheless, that *pain* and *evil* really exist in

the world: the Manicheans, therefore, (concluded Baile) were not so reprehensible in attributing to an *evil principle* (such as we have already mentioned) the *pains* and *miseries* attendant on human life; or it must be candidly acknowledged, that we cannot at all account for this sad *phenomenon*, and that our *reason*, that pretended source of light and evidence, is fit only to perplex us, and raise clouds of doubt and uncertainty in the mind,---

I HAVE been the more particular in the deduction of this sophistical reasoning, as by exposing its futility and weakness, I shall have an opportunity of overturning the first principle of *modern infidelity*, which generally runs in this stile: "God is essentially good; and this adorable attribute necessarily influences all his determinations and decrees: it is therefore impossible, that he could have been the author of any system, or institution, which denounces future evil to any of his creatures."----

Now Baile's supposition, that God had no other view in the creation of the world, but that of manifesting his *goodness*, and rendering his creatures *happy*, is a gratuitous and arbitrary *hypothesis*, destitute of proof, and not even so much as *probable*. So long as he maintained himself in posses-

sion of this supposition, he baffled all the efforts of his antagonists; nor could he be silenced (for this dispute was carried on in the face of all Europe) until publicly challenged by Monsieur De la Placette to produce one solid proof of his favourite supposition.

It is true, Baile died soon after this, and had it not in his power to make a public reply to this new opponent. But though he had lived, and been disposed not to give up the cause so tamely, what could he have replied, or how could he have demonstrated the point in question?

FATHER MALLEBRANCHE had also read Baile's objections, and maturely weighed the merits of the supposition he went upon; but so far from discovering any degree of evidence or probability in it, he thought he could turn the objections themselves into proofs of a very opposite tendency, that is, of the truth of the Christian religion itself. The thought is so ingenious, that I think the reader will be well pleased to meet it here.

“ God, therefore, (says Mallebranche) being in himself infinitely *perfect* and *happy*, and the world and all creatures possible essentially *limited* and *imperfect*, there could have been no proportion between their ex-

istence and his *glory*"---In this he agrees with Monsieur Baile: but what consequence are we to infer from this principle? That God could have had no other view in creating them but their *sole happiness*?---By no means, replied Mallebranche: all the good he could bestow upon them, or they were capable of receiving, was still *finite* and *limited*, from their incapacity of receiving what was *infinite* in itself."

"THEIR happiness, therefore, was not an object that could have engaged all his attention; nor can it be said, without temerity, that this could have been his only view."

"THE only consequence (concludes Mallebranche) that may be drawn from the principle above established, is this, That God would never have resolved upon creating the world, if he had not had the means of giving it, in one sense, an *infinite value* and *dignity*, deserving all his *attention* and *love*: this means was the INCARNATION of his *son*, which reflects an *infinite price* and *value* on the homage and obedience of man, whose nature the *son* of God condescended to assume."

IN this admirable union of the *divine* and *human* natures, we see all the attributes of God displayed in the most eminent manner;

his *goodness, power, wisdom, justice, mercy,* &c. This, therefore, was the only object, that could answer the purpose of his *glory*, and what he had principally in view in the work of the *Creation*!---Thus said, Mal-lebranche, in the system of *religion* itself we find the full solution of this difficulty; which was meant, or at least manifestly tended in its nature, to overthrow it. These principles are laid down at large in his *Conversations Chretiennes*, and in his *Treatise de la Nature; et de la Grace*.

MONS. DE LA PLACETTE did not go so far in his conjectures, but contented himself with destroying the foundation of Baile's sophistical reasoning, and exposing the weakness of his favourite supposition.

DOCTOR KING, and the celebrated Leibnitz had also entered the lists with Baile on this interesting question; which produced two very curious, and remarkable systems, diametrically opposite one to the other.

"THE former, in his *Origin of Evil*, lays it down as a principle, that the Creator's design in his formation of the world was principally to exercise and manifest his *power*; that being in himself infinitely *perfect*, he found nothing in the idea of *external* things, that could have been a

motive to him to bring them into being ; that, with regard to him, they had nothing *good* in themselves, and that it was his *choice* alone that placed them in that category ; that being in himself infinitely *good*, at the same time that he willed the existence of the world, he also willed the *good* of every individual, so far as was consistent with the general *design*, and the *means* he had chosen to exercise his *power* : now these means were necessarily connected with a certain series of *physical* or *natural evil* ; such as *pain, sickness, death, &c.*"

" Who then will presume to arraign the *Godhead* for permitting those *evils*, which were naturally inseparable from the plan which he freely, and as absolute master, laid down to himself, with the view of exercising his infinite *power* ? We may as well arraign, and take him to task, for creating a world at all."

As to what we call *moral evil*, and the *guilt* we incur by the violation of our *moral* duties, this could not have been prevented, says Dr. King, but by depriving man of his *liberty* and *freewill*, which must have made of the entire world a mere *machine*, where all had been governed by the laws of *mecharism* and irresistible *motion* ; a state which cannot be deemed so proper

for the exercise of God's infinite *power*, as that in which man is left *free*, and capable of *meriting* future reward."

ALTHOUGH this system must appear defective from the Author's affecting to confine the vast and incomprehensible designs of the *Creator* to the sole exercise of his *power*, seconded, as I may say, by his *goodness*; yet the chain of his reasoning is solid and just, and presents many ideas that throw abundance of light on this dark subject. In his disquisitions on the topic of *moral evil* particularly, he shews he had studied human nature very carefully, and that with a great understanding he also possessed an excellent heart.

THE great difficulty in the matter here before us, is to establish a *physical* system that may satisfy all our doubts; and from a clear view of the general plan of the *creation*, lead us into the mystery of *moral evil*; and, if possible, ascertain the reason why the Creator permitted it to enter into the plan of his work. But where shall we find the clew to this great discovery? Or is it to be found any where but in *religion* alone? To demonstrate this, we need but reflect on the insufficiency and apparent weakness of every *principle*, that philosophy alone has been hitherto able to devise, in

the view of clearing up our doubts on this head. This will appear still more striking when we take a view of the famous Leibnitz's system.

THIS great man, the glory and ornament of Germany, and one of the vastest geniusses that have appeared in our century, saw with regret the insufficiency of all these merely philosophical *hypotheses*, and flattered himself with the hope of striking out one, that might effectually satisfy our doubts, and as Pope expresses it,

Vindicate the ways of God to Man.

“ THE Almighty therefore (says Leibnitz, in his *Theodicæa*) having an infinity of *possible worlds* present to his mind, and power to produce them all with the same *ease*, must have chosen *this* preferably to every other, since it was this which he really produced. This *actual* world, therefore, was that which was the most *conformable* to the nature of his attributes; the most *worthy* himself; in a word, the *best* of all *possible worlds*.

“ THIS world being in itself one great compound, its parts are so closely linked and united together, that not a single particle can be retrenched, without changing the whole.---This *best* of all worlds possible comprehended, therefore, all the *actual*

laws of motion, the laws of the *union* that subsists between the *soul* and *body*, the particular *imperfections* of each creature, and the *general laws* according to which the Creator distributes his *graces* among them.

“FROM this it appears, that God was not obliged to prevent the *evils*, *natural* or *moral*, necessarily or occasionally connected with this system; on the contrary, it must appear, that *evil*, as well *moral* as *natural*, entered, in some sense, into the plan of his work.”

“NOT that we must imagine (says Leibnitz) that God has positively willed or intended that *moral evil* should be: no; he has but merely *permitted* it, because it was in some sense connected with the innumerable *perfections* of the creation. It is these *perfections* that raise the *present* world above all *possible* worlds; and it is not the most *perfect*, because *sin* has found place in it: but what we should say is this, that the most *perfect* of worlds is that in which *sin* and *moral evil* has taken place. God has not therefore willed *sin* or *moral evil* in itself; nor consequently predestinated any of his creatures to it.---”

THIS way of reasoning has been termed *optimism* by the learned, from the suppo-

sition it is built upon, of *this* being the *best* of all possible worlds.

It was for some time imagined that Mr. Pope had adopted this system. This conjecture took rise from that celebrated and favourite *maxim* of his, which he so strenuously *inculcates* in his Essay on Man :

Whatever is, is *right*.

BUT he publicly disavowed the charge, in his letter to Monsieur Racine on this subject; and further declared to his friends in England, that he had never seen Leibnitz's treatise on these matters; or at least not till he had composed his Essay on Man. The judgment we are therefore to form of his sentiments on this head, is, that according to the plan which the Creator proposed to himself in the formation of the world, *whatever is, is right* : a sentiment which will stand the test of the severest *philosophical* or *theological* scrutiny; because all that is, is either *necessarily* or *occasionally* connected with the pre-established laws of the general system of things; that is, with the general laws of *motion*, those of the *union* which subsists between the *soul* and *body*, and the more particular laws of the *liberty* and *free-will* of man.

PEOPLE not sufficiently conversant in these matters, may here suspect that Leibnitz

meant, by his system of *optimism*, to deny the reality of a *future* and *better* state after this life. But this is a mistake: he only talks in this place of those *transient* and *subordinate* worlds, which it was in God's power to create: of all which he says, this was the *best* and *most perfect*. Leibnitz was a Christian, and believed a *future*, permanent and immortal state.

THAT therefore, which peculiarly characterizes Leibnitz's system, and distinguishes it from Dr. King's, is his supposition, that this *actual world* is the *best* of all worlds possible, independently even of the *choice* which God made of it; whereas Dr. King supposes that, with regard to the Creator, there could have appeared nothing in the idea of any possible world whatever, which could have recommended it particularly to his choice; and that it was the free determination of the Divine will alone, which gave this *actual world* the degree of merit it holds: for all possible worlds being essentially under the idea of *creation*, must be necessarily *limited* and *imperfect*; and though constituted in different degrees of perfection comparatively to each other, yet all equally indifferent to, because infinitely distant from, the *Supreme Being*, which

consequently may produce worlds more and more perfect without end.

LEIBNITZ therefore, seems to have derogated from the idea of the Divine *greatness* and *power*, in supposing *this* the most perfect of all *worlds* possible; or attributing any degree of excellence to it, relatively to the Creator and his sovereign views, above any other world. And thus even this pompous system, so much cried up by Leibnitz's adherents, betrays, even at the first view, that general character of weakness entailed upon every human understanding.

To conclude: the best, and indeed the only sure method of reasoning philosophically on the subject before us, should seem to be this;---*Pain* and *evil* exist really in the world, and not surely without the Creator's knowledge and permission: the obvious and natural consequence of this experimental truth is, first, That the *happiness* of *man* was not the *sole* or *principal* object of the Creation; secondly, That *pain* was not introduced into the world without cause; and thirdly, That in the designed system of things, which the great Creator alone can comprehend and unfold, *man* could not have been totally exempt from it.

If it has found place in this world, why not also in a *future* state? And what created

understanding can determine the *bounds* of that *Supreme Justice*, whose inalienable right it is to adjudge *punishment*, as well as *reward*?---Alas! it has no bounds; for none of the Divine perfections have any.--- Again: What *mortal* can comprehend the full extent of his *obligations* and *duty* to the godhead; or the degree of *malice* and *guilt* contained in the revolt and disobedience of man? Will the *unbeliever* then presume to *dictate* to the *Sovereign Judge*?---Should he not rather *submit* and *tremble*?

C H A P. IV.

Succession of pain and pleasure, how conducive to our happiness both in the natural and moral sense,

NOW that it appears, both from the *composition* of our frame, and the state of *probation* in which we have been placed, that *pain* could not have been totally excluded from the world, is it not truly admirable how the Creator has regulated the manner of its operation? how he has blended these ungrateful sensations with the opposite feelings of *pleasure*, and even

made them subservient to the production of human *happiness*?

THE succession of *pain* and *pleasure* which he has established in the soul, is indeed the surest pledge of our happiness both in the *natural* and *moral* order of things.--In the first, it is what most effectually answers the purpose of our *preservation*, and gives at the same time a *relish* to the pleasures and enjoyments of life, which they should otherwise have wanted.

I SHALL here give an instance of the *goodness* and *wisdom* of *Providence* in both these views.'

THE pleasure we feel in satisfying the natural and periodical cravings of *hunger*, was intentionally given to invite us to take our necessary food, in such quantity, as should properly support Nature: and it is very remarkable, that this kind of *pleasure* rises always in proportion to the necessity we stand in of food and nourishment, at least in sound and healthy constitutions; and in general, as the learned Gassendi observes, the more important and necessary any particular purpose of Nature is, the higher sense of *pleasure* hath *Providence* annexed to the means of effecting and promoting it.

BUT to follow the thread of our rea-

soning ; if things had been so ordained, that we should on every occasion feel the same *pleasure* in the use of *eatables*, this agreeable sensation, instead of contributing to our preservation, would soon cut short our very existence itself, by engaging us to take in such quantities of food, as must have oppressed the stomach, and overpowered the digestive faculties.

To obviate this evil, what has the author of Nature done ? Our own daily experience shews it : he has annexed a sensation of *uneasiness* and *pain* to the use of *victuals*, so soon as the foregoing sensation of *pleasure* ceases to be *necessary*, or *useful*.

HERE then is an instance of the expediency, and even necessity of *pain* (in the present system of things) which so much shocked the Manicheans. These men considered *pain* only in an abstract light, without attending either to the unsearchable views of the Creator, or the composition of human nature, or the order and regulation under which it has been introduced into the world ; which to every understanding, capable of reflection, is a most striking proof of the Divine *goodness* and *wisdom*. To which I must add, that a single instance of this kind is enough to convince us, that *pain* may be equally ne-

cessary in a thousand other cases, though we may not be able to see immediately into the connexion it has every where with the design of our *preservation*.

BUT how does *pain* contribute to enhance our *pleasures*, or give a higher *relish* to our gratifications, and enjoyments?---

A LONG and uninterrupted fruition turns *pleasure*, as experience shews us, into a *toil*; for this reason, that it fatigues too much the organs of sensation, and exhausts the animal spirits: hence it happens in our present state, that *pleasure*, if not interrupted by alternate *pain*, so often palls upon the *mind*, and creates *satiety*. There is even, we may venture to affirm, in the *mind* itself, a certain weakness and limitation, which renders it incapable of sustaining a long course even of mental delights and gratifications.---Be that as it may, thus far, at least, is certain, that a man whose health has never been disturbed by *sickness*, nor his pleasures crossed by intervening *disappointment*, knows neither the true value of *health* or *pleasure*: but then how sweet and delightful the return of *health* after a little *indisposition*! and how affecting the sensations of that enjoyment, which has been crossed and endangered by intervening *difficulties* and

disappointments !---So it is in fact, that the intervals of *pain* give a kind of novelty to *pleasure* itself, and produce that agreeable emotion of the spirits, which quickens every appetite of the soul.

SUCH the *physical* advantages, which man derives from this established succession of *pain* and *pleasure* in the soul !---But the *moral* good, arising from this wise regulation of the human feelings, is still of greater importance to us. It was certainly meant by the Creator to preserve the mind in a happy *equilibrium*, and equally prevent the extremes of *presumption* and *despair*.

IF this regulation had not taken place, then all must have been *pleasure*, or all *pain*: extremes equally dangerous to the *virtue* and *happiness* of man in his present state of instability and weakness.

IN the first place, if all our sensations were accompanied with *pleasure*, we should have been exposed to the continual danger and temptation of attributing all our *happiness* to ourselves, and affecting perhaps an absolute *independency* of the Creator.

WE see something like this even under the present dispensation, though altogether unfavourable to such sentiments. What pitiable weakness, what mad temerity betray themselves frequently in men, who

have been flushed with a long series of prosperity, or suddenly raised to great and eminent dignities!---The son of Philip of Macedon having succeeded, perhaps beyond his most sanguine hope, in his attack on the Persian empire, must henceforth be stiled a God!

WHAT should it have been, if this giddy and inconstant being, *man*, had no *difficulty* to encounter, no *pain* to undergo, or balance to weigh down his presumption and levity!

GOD has been therefore careful to provide against this inconvenience, by establishing a constant and unavoidable succession of *pain* and *pleasure* in the soul; a regulation, which must necessarily convince us, that these interesting feelings, on which all our *happiness* or *misery* depends, are derived to us solely from that hand, which gave us existence, and in whose power it is to continue, or at pleasure to withdraw all favours from us.---

ON the other hand, if all our feelings were accompanied with *pain*, we should not have known the hand that brought us into being; we should have denied the very name of *goodness* and *providence*: what do I say? We should have been necessitated (I dread the thought) to hate

and curse our very existence, and it's Author.---But in the present order of things, where so many agreeable sensations lye before us, we cannot but love and cherish the being we have received; and discover in every pleasing sentiment, or feeling of the soul, a new and powerful motive to bless and praise the Creator.

AND indeed, if we do not suppose circumstances so peculiarly distressing, as to deprive a man of the use of his *reason*, it must be acknowledged that he is always provided with agreeable sensations enough, of one kind or other, to counterbalance any weight of misery, under which he may labour.---No one, I believe, ever wished to *die*, purely for the *pleasure* of parting life; and nothing but the supposed impossibility of recovering *lost health*, with the common blessings attendant thereon, could naturally reconcile us to the thought of approaching *dissolution*.

I SAY, *naturally*; for I speak not here of *supernatural* motives, to which the love of this *present* life, with all its appendages of *health, fortune, liberty, &c.* must, in the balance of reason, yield and give place.

BUT in our estimation of these last mentioned benefits it is certain, that the loss of a man's *health, fortune, &c.* and (I shall

venture to add in one sense at least) the wreck even of his *fame* and *character*, are all losses *subordinate* to that of *life*; because in this are contained the means, or at least the possibility, of recovering all again by a more virtuous, prudent, and steady course of conduct.

WITH what reluctance does not even the most determined *self-destroyer* proceed to that fatal extremity?---Whatever good countenance he may affect to put on, it is certain that Nature shudders at the thought of *destruction*, and that the very idea of so cruel an expedient throws the soul into a state of profound melancholy, which can scarce be dissembled, and of which we frequently discover the most evident traces, when the bloody scene is over.

CATO himself, whose apparently heroic end has been the subject of so much admiration among the Romans, and on our *stage*, could not help betraying strong symptoms of uneasiness on that occasion, though he affected to support his resolution with the wisdom and philosophy of Plato, and seemed actually feasting in the anticipation of *immortality*. The love of life, which no present distress can totally extinguish, returned incessantly upon him, and dashed the apparent splendor of his premeditated *exit* with sentiments of conscious horror.

THIS appeared in various instances. Whilst he was revolving the fatal design, he gave one of his servants, for a slight offence, a violent blow on the face. He flew into a rage with his sons, who, through a sentiment of filial duty and affection, had secreted his sword: he pushed back his physician with violence, when he came to dress his wound: in a word, with a savage ferocity, he tore his own bowels; and in this critical moment, at once demonstrated the *regret*, with which he parted *life*, and entirely forfeited that high character of wisdom, for which he had been so justly celebrated before.

IN general, therefore, the idea of *suicide* can only proceed from a *disordered* reason, which cannot attend to the enormity of such *self-abuse*; or an excess of haughtiness and pride, which will not bend to *circumstances*, but in its rage stifles all the tender sentiments of Nature.

C H A P. V.

Conclusion of the foregoing Matter.

FROM what has been said it must evidently appear, that after all the *evils* which the oppression or malice of men may bring upon us, or our own weakness and misconduct may have occasioned, there is still some sensible portion of *comfort* and *enjoyment* in life, arising from the general benefits of existence, and the periodical returns of health and liberty, however slight in appearance; but above all, from that sovereign and universal resource of mortals, *hope*; which, however distant its object may appear, affords always an immediate, and most affecting consolation to the soul.

For these reasons many philosophers of note have advanced, that there is visibly a greater portion of *good* than *evil* in the world: a position, which has been strongly maintained, and in the opinion of good judges clearly demonstrated by Dr. King in his *Origin of Evil*, *Sherlock* on *Providence*, and many others.

BUT it must be acknowledged, that it is the idea and hope of a *future* state, which principally turns the scale in our favour,

and makes the portion of *good* to preponderate over that of *evil*. If we could be stript of this good *hope*, or our imagination confined to the immediate enjoyments of this life, then indeed the portion of *evil* existing in the world must have been judged to outweigh all the *good* or *happiness* it contains; but there is in this just and powerful sentiment a fund of satisfaction and delight which, joined to the many other blessings we are actually possessed of, seems to give the sum total of *good* a visible superiority over that of *evil*.

BUT be that as it may, what are we to think of certain modern philosophers, who would treat this just *hope* as *chimerical*, and represent it as a pleasing *illusion*, which men are fond of indulging to sooth their *pride*, and forget, if possible, how nearly their condition approaches to that of the *brute*?---These are the sentiments, among many other impious ones, of the author of *L'homme Machine*, which is commonly attributed to the Marquis d'Argens; they are also contained, we are sorry to say it, in the famous *epistle* of a very great and illustrious personage in the *north* to the late Marshal Keith ---It is hard to say of such sentiments, which they deserve most, our pity, or indignation.

ONE thing however is certain, that while we see, on the one hand, so much real *evil* in the world, so many severe trials, which *virtue* is exposed to; and, on the other, have any idea of a Supreme Being, infinitely *good* and *just*, we cannot but conclude, that our *present* existence is a state of *trial* and *probation*, which is to be followed by another, in which approved *VIR-TUE* shall be rewarded, and *VICE* punished according to the rules of eternal and inva-riable *justice*.

COULD we have the least probable suspicion of falsity or illusion, in this sentiment, then indeed our condition should have been truly *miserable*, and much inferior to that of the *brute*, which we now so much despise. Our reflection on the *past*, and apprehension of *future* events (faculties unknown to the *brute* kind) with a thousand other feelings peculiar to *humanity*, are an exhausted fund of eternal *misery* and *pain*, which nothing but that blessed *hope* can solidly relieve:

—The soul, *uneasy* and *confined* at home,—
Rests, and *expatiates*, in a life to come,—

POPE.

THESE are the reflections we had to make on the nature of *pain*, which still continues a stumbling-block to certain weak

and *sceptical* heads ; men, who delight in bewildering themselves in the inextricable mazes of *speculation*, and seek only to confound all things in an endless round of *doubt* and *uncertainty*.

THE wisdom, however, with which *pain* has been attempered with *pleasure*, and their mutual concurrence in innumerable cases in promoting the general cause of *happiness* and *self-love*, leaves not the least shadow of doubt concerning the *goodness* of God in the present system of things : nor can we draw any other rational conclusion from this established *succession* and *alternity* of *pain* and *pleasure* in the human soul, but that the Creator has been willing by this means to afford his *rational* creatures an opportunity of exercising their *freewill* and *liberty*, with a certain degree of ease and pleasure to ourselves.

C H A P. VI.

Universal influence of Self-love in all our determinations and actions.

FROM the original constitution of human nature, as we have already observed, we necessarily *love ourselves*; and this principle enters into all our deliberations and actions. In every movement of the soul we seek, on one side or other, for happiness, *real*, or *imaginary*; nor is it possible for us to incline to the pursuit of any thing, but as it presents some face, or appearance, of *pleasure* or *enjoyment*.

EVEN what we commonly call *imaginary* happiness, includes always some degree of *enjoyment*: for the imagination itself, independently of the attainment of it's supposed object, carries along with it a striking, though transient charm, powerful enough of itself to engage and employ all the attention of the mind.--- "Thus, says *Rochevoucault*, there are people, whose *Self-love* is such, that they find means, when they are in *love*, to be taken up with their *passion*, without being so with its *object*."

SOME writers of eminence, and particularly *Rochevoucault*, have given a critical detail of the operations of the principle,

which makes the subject of our present enquiry, and with the help of this clew unravelled in a great measure the mystery of the human heart. How many *false virtues*, or *real vices* under the disguise of *virtue*, have been detected and exposed in these valuable writings!

THESE writers, however, have been often accused of disgracing and calumniating human nature, by affecting to place it in the most unfavourable light, and putting forth every *hideous* feature of the soul, at the same time that they have industriously passed by many amiable lineaments and qualities, discoverable even in the most exceptionable characters.

IT is not to be doubted, that there may have been a blameable affectation in this satyrical display of wit and humour; and that some men of genius have indulged too much this taste for what is called the *caricatura*; of which Rabelais and Swift are the two most striking instances among the moderns, as Diogenes and Lucian were among the ancients; though it cannot be denied, that this species of writing is in some respects very useful, and tends much to the correction of *vice* and *folly*, as well as to the advancement of knowledge, and the formation of a true taste and judg-

ment.---We do not, however, mean to adopt this method; but taking human nature in the most favourable point of view, our design is to shew, that all our determinations and actions, - whether *good* or *bad*, *praise-worthy*, or *blameable*, take their rise in *Self-love*, and that this is the universal source, and spring, from which, in a certain sense, they all flow.

As to those actions, which are manifestly *vicious*, and repugnant to the sacred dictates of *reason*, there is no doubt that they are entirely influenced by that *principle*: it may not, however, be unentertaining to the reader to compare some actions of this stamp to others of a doubtful nature, and such, as though they cannot be denominated *virtuous*, because dictated by the immediate love of *life* and *ease*, yet deserve not the name of *vice*, because they are productive of no *evil consequences*. The contrast, I mean here to draw, is between Cato and Perseus, the last of Alexander's successors in the throne of Macedon.

THIS unhappy prince having been defeated and taken prisoner by the consul *Paul Æmilius*, earnestly prayed the conqueror to spare him the mortification of being dragged in triumph before the *Roman* people; to which the consul returned coldly

for answer, "That the *favour, which the king demanded, lay entirely in his own hands:*" giving him by these words to understand, that he was at liberty to prevent the mortification, he apprehended, by a *woluntary death*.---Perseus understood full well the meaning of these words, but declined the expedient.

CATO, in circumstances equally distressing, disdains to receive the least favour from the hands of Cæsar; and, rather than live a moment by the clemency of an usurper, fiercely points the sword against his own breast.

WHAT was the motive that guided these men to resolutions so opposite, in circumstances perfectly parallel? Was it not evidently the same principle of *Self-love*, differently applied and directed?

To Perseus it magnifies the terrors of *death*, to which life and existence, however embittered by the frowns of fortune, seemed yet to make a tolerable contrast: Cato it seduces with false notions of magnanimity, and a distant prospect of *glory*; that is, of a great and illustrious name with posterity.

THE consul's proposal to the unfortunate Perseus had all the air of an insult, and seemed rather to imply a cruel aggravation, than point out a remedy to his misfortunes;

but a voluntary death seemed the only remaining *salve* for Cato's pride.

IN a word, Cato is ashamed to *live*; Perseus afraid to *die*: and the result of this striking contrast is, that as the one had proposed to himself a point of *happiness* in *preserving* his being, so did the other in *relinquishing* it.

STILL, I must repeat it here (and wish, for the sake of my countrymen, that this sentiment were better established in general) this last act of Cato's life is extremely reprehensible; not only because it was repugnant to the first dictates of nature and reason; but also because the love of his country, with which no doubt he was animated in a high degree, demanded the preservation of his life: for it is not to be doubted, that a man of his resolution and wisdom might have greatly served the cause of *liberty* upon any future favourable occasion, had he had the virtue to live.--- Plato, had he been then living, would have condemned him, notwithstanding the general prejudice of the *Romans* in favour of *suicide* in the like circumstances: nor is there, perhaps, in any author, a more striking instance of the *false sublime*, than what Lucan says on this occasion:

—*Victrix causa Diis placuit, sed vieta Catoni.*

It will, I know, be readily allowed, that *Self-love* had a principal share in both these actions, whereof the one was manifestly *criminal*, and the other required no great effort of *virtue* to support it: but its influence in cases of real *virtue* will be disputed. Let us therefore shift the scene, and consider the matter in another light.

Is there a virtue in the soul, which is not influenced by *Self-love*? or, where is the virtuous man, who seeks not his *personal happiness* in *virtue*?

THERE are virtues (say the modern Platonists) which are acknowledged to be perfectly *disinterested*; nay, whose entire *merit* consists in their disinterestedness, and superiority to all the dictates of *Self-interest* and *Self-love*. Would not the least appearance of such a *motive* destroy, in the eyes of the world, all the supposed merit of *benevolence*, *friendship*, and the like exalted virtues? Would it not convert the glorious consciousness, which naturally accompanies such noble deeds, into secret reproach and confusion?---

BUT the entire weight of this objection will be found to rest upon the word *Self-interest*; which, in this place, is ambiguous and equivocal.

IF by *Self-interest* is meant here a compensation, or return of kindness in any external way, as expected and intended by the benefactor, or friend, it is undoubtedly incompatible with the idea of true *benevolence* and *friendship*, which seek for nothing distinct from the *pleasure* of the *kind act* itself; and are known to be, in this sense, their own *reward*.---If by *Self-interest* we understand the *pleasure* and *satisfaction* which is inseparable, and even indistinct from *benevolence* and *friendship*, it is not at all incompatible with these sentiments.

WILL the world arraign a good man, or can he possibly reproach himself, for the *pleasure* he feels in doing *good*? And is there not always, prior even to any reflection of the mind, a certain internal complacency and satisfaction accompanying these generous affections?---In a word, can it be said, that sentiments, like these, which so deeply interest the heart of man, are totally *disinterested*?

MR. HUME would endeavour to insinuate a fallacy in this way of reasoning.---“It hath been remarked (says he, in his *Essays Moral and Political*) that every act of *virtue*, or *friendship*, is attended with a secret pleasure; from which it hath been concluded, that *virtue* and *friendship* could not be *disin-*

interested---But the *fallacy* of this (continues he) is obvious: the *virtuous* sentiment or passion, *produces* the *pleasure*, and does not *arise* from it. I feel a *pleasure* in doing good to my friend, *because I love him*; but I do not love him for the *sake* of that *pleasure*."

THE objection is specious. But this ingenious writer does not distinguish between the *original* and, as I may say, *intrinsic* pleasure, which directly engages the mind in the love and practice of *virtue*, and the *reflexive* pleasure, which is but *adventitious*, and merely *consequent* upon the virtuous *act*, or *sentiment*.

WHAT Mr. Hume says in the objection, is applicable only to the *reflexive* pleasure arising from the consciousness, or remembrance of having done an act of virtue; in which sense it is certain, the *pleasure* does not *produce* the virtuous sentiment, but is rather the *effect* of it.

IN this sense it is also true, as Mr. Hume observes, that I feel a *pleasure* in doing good to my friend, *because I love him*; but do not love him for the *sake* of that *pleasure*:" for this is purely a *reflexive* and *consequential* pleasure, which might not perhaps have been intended, and possibly did not occur to the mind, when it first launched

out into that sentiment. This however requires some explanation.

It is acknowledged by all, who have been happy enough to cultivate an intimacy with *virtue*, that it's returns are, beyond expression, delightful to the mind; and surpass, by far, all the boasted relish of external gratifications.

WHAT, in fact, can equal the joy of having relieved *merit* in *distress*; or contributed, in any remarkable degree, to the happiness of our fellow-creatures? How happy the mind of a true lover of mankind! how beatifying the scene, which reflection opens to him!---The oppressed *widow* and desponding *orphan* rescued from misery, and drying up their tears! Honest *industry* encouraged, or revived, and spreading thro' the land! *Cities* rising from obscurity, or from the dust, to wealth and elegance! The country covered with the richest fruits of the earth, and holding out even to foreign nations the necessaries, and comforts, of life! *Oppression* of every kind restrained, punished, or disarmed!

SUCH the fruits of true *patriotic virtue*!--Lost in his admiration of this accumulated happiness, the extent of which he did not perhaps *foresee*, the *patriot* enters hourly

upon new scenes of *pleasure*; and his eye now feasts on prospects, the idea of which did not perhaps present itself even to his imagination, in the *original* design.

ADD to all this, the *pleasure* arising from the justly merited applause and gratitude of mankind towards their benefactor; a circumstance which always flatters the mind in a very delicate manner, and the more so, when not at all solicited, or expected.

THUS far, therefore, Mr. Hume is right in his observation, that the virtuous sentiment *produces* the pleasure, and does not *arise* from it; that is, the *reflexive* pleasure, which we have here sketched out.

BUT this is not at all applicable to the *direct* and *original* pleasure, which first engaged the mind in the exercise of *virtue*; for this was the sole, internal, and immediate *motive* of the act itself, and the *natural force*, which put the mind upon that amiable pursuit; as *impulse* is the *natural force*, which sets *bodies* in *motion*: with this essential difference, however, between the powers of the *soul*, and pure *matter*; that the latter is from its nature, incapable of giving itself any *impulse*, or *motion*, and in its operations is merely *passive*; whereas the *soul* hath received from the Creator,

an *active principle*, by the means of which she can rise at will to *sentiment* and action, and effectually pursue that *sentiment*, or lay it entirely aside.

WHATEVER side the soul may incline to in such circumstances, she is always led to it by some direct and immediate sense of *pleasure*, as her internal and proper *motive*; if to indulge and pursue the conceived sentiment, her immediate *motive* is still the innate *pleasure* of the sentiment itself; if, on the contrary, the soul inclines to check and restrain it, the immediate *motive* then is another different sense of *pleasure*, arising from the removal of some painful *apprehension*, which the soul should have been exposed to by persevering in it; as that of subsequent *pain*, *dishonour*, *misery*, &c. This apprehension being grievous, and hateful to the mind, the idea of its removal must be necessarily pleasing; and this *pleasure* then stands our immediate *motive* to decline the pursuit.

OR if this way of reasoning should appear too far fetched, I shall content myself with a nearer *motive*, which is the *apprehension* itself, and *fear* of some of the *evils* above-mentioned: for *fear* as effectually deters the mind from apprehended *pain* and *evil*, as *love* invites it to the prosecution of *good*

and *pleasure*. But the *pain* which this apprehension gives, is at the same time accompanied with a sense of *pleasure*, arising from the possibility of its removal; and thus *pleasure* always enters one way or other into the *motive* of our actions.

It is also to be observed here, that we may break off from the prosecution of an act, or sentiment, without being moved thereto by the apprehension of any subsequent *evil* at all, and purely for the *pleasure* of exercising our free-will and independency. For there are people who, from this motive alone, seem to take pride in steeling the mind against the attacks of sollicitation and persuasion. If to one of this character you put the question: "Why will you refuse to do this? Or why not continue to do, as before?--- the answer immediately is--- "Because it is my *pleasure*."---

Thus every possible manner of engaging the mind to action may be reduced to this one general head, viz. the immediate sentiment of *pleasure*, inseparable from the act itself, and which constitutes its internal *interest* and *motive*.

In this sense no act, not those even of the most exalted *virtue*, can be called *disinterested*; and every possible act, or senti-

ment of humanity, carries necessarily along with it this double relation; viz. the love of its *object*, and the love of *one's-self*; or to speak with more precision still, the love of the *object* for one's own *immediate good*.---

It is, therefore, perfectly equal how we turn the proposition---“I feel a *pleasure* in “doing *good* to mankind, because I *love* them: or---I *love* mankind, because I feel a *pleasure* in doing them *good*.”---The terms are synonymous, and the *love of self* always prevails, in whatever light the proposition is stated: for it is impossible to *love* any object, without feeling an immediate *pleasure* in loving it; and it is equally impossible to feel that *pleasure* without *loving* the object.

THIS is finely exemplified in that noble sentiment of Titus, when reflecting one day, that he had conferred no signal benefit on any of his subjects, he was heard to express these ever memorable words:---“My friends, I have *lost* a *day*!”---

HE accounted that day *lost* to his own happiness, in which he had made no *other* happy. And who could judge so truly of his feelings, as himself?---If this great prince's *virtue* procured him the glorious appellation of the *delight of mankind*, (DELICIAE

GENÉRIS HUMANI) this was the prize of *pleasure* well understood, and of a truly rational and refined *sensibility*.

————— This world, 'tis true,
Was made for Cæsar—but for Titus too :
And which more *blest* ? Who *chain'd* his country, say ;
Or he, whose virtue *sig'd* to *lose* a day ?

AND here it is to be further observed, that the *pleasure* rises always in proportion, and keeps pace with the elevation and dignity of the *virtuous* sentiment. Thus the *pleasure* we feel in our love of the *Supreme Being*, infinitely transcends that of every other affection ; as in its turn *universal* benevolence, which takes in the entire human species, conveys a proportionably greater satisfaction and delight, than any particular attachment, or personal friendship, however warm and tender we may suppose it.

LOVE, and *personal friendships* in general, are commonly observed to lessen, and take away from the affection we owe to the rest of our species, and consequently deprive us of many opportunities of self-gratification and enjoyment, which the truly *benevolent* alone experience.

FROM what we have here advanced, it must appear, that the pure love of God, itself, is not totally *disinterested*. This at

first sight may appear a paradox. What! That supernatural affection, which raises the mind above the world, and all created objects! That purest, and sublimest of all virtues! Must it be thought, that *Self-gratification* and *Self-love* enter for any part in the production of a sentiment so *divine*? And how reconcile this *position* with true philosophy and reason?

C H A P. VII.

Objection, taken from the pure love of God, answered with some further remarks.

DESIROUS of removing every species of objection, that may seem to lie against the principle above established, and of illustrating, as much as possible, the genuine principles of *morality* and *virtue*, the Author has thought it necessary to consecrate a particular chapter to this consideration of the *pure love* of God, which is the first difficulty that occurs to a *religious* mind on this subject, and indeed the only one, that carries any degree of weight. It will, however, be found, upon examination, that the principle here established is per-

fectly consonant to the purest principles of *religion*, and that the opposite opinion, however flattering it may be to our pride and vanity, is but a fond *enthusiasm*; and indeed, a dangerous one; for it was this *sublime* whim (if I may give it that epithet) which gave rise to the errors of *quietism*, and held for a time under a kind of fascination the great and enlightened spirit of Fenelon himself. The objection, here hinted to, runs in this manner.

“THE Almighty, by an extraordinary inspiration of *grace* enlightens the understanding, and inflames, or as it were transports, the *human will*. He makes the soul feel in the most affecting manner, the amiableness of his perfections, the glory of his being, the extent of his power, and the infinite riches of his goodness and mercy. These great and magnificent objects, opportunely conveyed to the soul, enrapture and transport her into an ocean of *delight* and *love*, which may be truly called an anticipation of *beatitude*. External motives, that even of *future glory* itself, have, we may suppose, no share in this work; it is superior to every idea of that kind, and compatible even with the supposition of a total and immediate *annihilation*, if such a case were proposed.”

THIS is all that the most fervent piety can suggest on the subject of *divine love*: for as to that notion of certain *spiritualists*, who extended this doctrine to the case even of a certainty of one's *damnation* the ensuing moment, and asserted, that even in this supposition, the pure love of God should banish from the *soul* every thought, or regard to one's own *safety*; that is a mere exaggeration, and built on the supposition even of an *impossibility*: for these two things are utterly incompatible, "The love of God above all things;" and "the immediate *reprobation* of the soul." And how far can the supposition of an absolute *impossibility* contribute to the elucidation of truth, particularly when it is assumed as a proof of the point in question?

THE *love* of God, in the terms above deduced, which alone seem properly to characterise it, is an act or sentiment of *love*, the most perfect and sublime that can possibly enter the heart of man. But is even that Divine Affection totally *disinterested*, and divested of all regard to *self*?

It manifestly appears, it is not. On the contrary, the more it abstracts on the one hand from the idea of *reward*, the more ardently it pursues it on the other. *External* motives operate not then, it is true,

on the soul; not even that of *future glory* itself, as has been already mentioned: but then the *internal*, that is the actual, sentiment of *delight* and *joy*, accompanying that grand affection, acts with redoubled vigour on the mind, and even rises in proportion with the decrease, or absence, of every *external* motive. What else could support the soul in this extraordinary effort and exertion of her powers? Or rather, what is that supernatural act of love, itself, but the inward *joy* and *delight* we feel, when absorbed in the contemplation of the *divine* perfections? It is, truly, in this sense, its own *reward*?

NOR is this a mere *passive* feeling of the soul, as the *quietists* pretended: no, it is an *active* and powerful sentiment, which leads directly to the exercise of every virtue, commanded, or recommended in the *gospel*.

THIS glow of *divine love* is, therefore, in fact, the perfection, or consummation of *human* Self-love, which then finds its account in the supposition even of a total and immediate *annihilation*; for still in this supposition it must be infinitely *pleasing* to the virtuous soul to lay down, if required, her entire being at the feet of her sovereign *Lord* and *Benefactor*. Must the soul in this case, refuse herself this *last*, this great

and truly *virtuous* gratification? Is she not rather *obliged* to promote and indulge it? Is not this sense of *delight* and *joy* in reality *inseparable*, and even *indistinct* from the love of God itself? Here it was, that the powerful eloquence of Bossuet visibly triumphed over Fenelon himself; and, like a torrent, carried all before it. But the latter, though vanquished, shared also in the triumph; and his humble and candid submission did as much honour on this occasion, to his *virtue*, as all his literary productions had before done to his admirable *genius*. He did not, undoubtedly, foresee or know the abuse the *quietists* made of his writings and authority.

LET us, therefore, dissemble with ourselves ever so much, and flatter our pride with vain ideas of pure *spiritualized* and abstracted *love*; the *love* of *self* lies still at bottom, and dwells and reigns in our inmost soul. This is Nature's system, and the ordination of God.---Does it become us to attempt reforming the system of the *Most-High*?---And if God has so formed the heart of man, as to have attached his happiness to the rational gratification of his *Self-love*, even when God himself is the object of his affections, what remains for man to do, but adore the gracious dispen-

sations of the Creator, and gratefully co-operate with his paternal views in the study and pursuit of true happiness?

THIS one thing, therefore, we may assert with confidence, that though we cannot ascertain the *secret* and *ineffable* means, by which divine *grace* operates in the soul, yet it cannot otherwise have its proper effect, than by affecting our *sensibility* at the same time that it enlightens our *reason*; and this can be only done by kindling up in the soul certain extraordinary feelings of *delight* and *joy*, which no *created* object or power can effect, and which then constitute the real strength and energy of the soul.

FROM the establishment of this general principle, both in the natural and supernatural order of things, as demonstrated in the foregoing pages, some very interesting questions arise, and of the greatest importance towards fixing the judgment with exactness and precision, on the important subject of *principle*, and *moral* sentiment.

THE mind of man, naturally inquisitive, and formed for the knowledge of truth, is ever busy in tracing that secret and invisible *chain*, which draws all things together, and forms that system of *order* and *harmony*, which we call *moral principle*; the conformity to which, or deviation from it, is

what constitutes the *merit* or *demerit* of our actions.

THE first link of this great *chain* we have discovered to be the innate *love* of *ourselves*. This is connected with a series of other observations, which will gradually lead us to the consideration of *virtue* in general, of *morality*, its *obligation*, and true *end*.

THE first thing, therefore, that presents itself to our consideration, after establishing the principle just mentioned, is to enquire into these general *wants* of Nature, for the supplying of which *Self-love* was given us; and those natural *affections* and *desires*, which it was intended to answer and gratify.---In this we shall discover the foundation, and first rise of *human society* in general.

C H A P. VIII.

Self-love of individuals, *the first foundation* of human Society, and its *chief support*.--
This truth exemplified in a variety of instances, deduced from our internal feelings.

HITHERTO we have considered *Self-love*, so far only as it regards the *individual*, its influence in the affair of

our immediate *preservation*, and the secret determinations of the mind. We now advance a step farther, in order to discover how far it concurs to the formation and stability of the *human society*, whereof we are members?---

NOTHING is more evident, as we shall see, than that the immediate *love of ourselves* is the first source and spring of this grand coalition, called the *human society*; though this last seems formed to thwart and sacrifice, on many occasions, our particular interests to those of others, who are often strangers, and unknown to us. And yet (such the inconsistency of human Nature!) this same principle, acting under another disguise, will not permit us candidly to acknowledge this truth, but would make us attribute all these effects to other causes, more flattering, indeed, to our vanity, but entirely distant from nature and truth.

THE fact, therefore, is, that when men first came together, and agreed to unite in society, they were moved thereto by a desire of alleviating their natural distresses, and enlarging the circle of their enjoyments. *Solitude* lay heavy on their minds; nor could they in this state answer all the demands of their *natural wants*, which rather became more importunate and clamorous,

because in this state more impotent and helpless.

THE first idea of mutual communication and *social* life, relieved the mind from all this distress; and the subsequent experience of the *sweets* and *charms* of a common *society*, soon convinced men of the reasonableness of the change they had made, and fully accounted for the *uneasiness* and *anxiety* they had laboured under in the state of *solitude*.

RELATIVE to this is what Archytas of Tarentum was wont to say, as Tully informs us, that "Though a man was raised
" up to the superior regions, and blessed
" with a full view of the stars, and all
" the beauty of the universe, yet even this
" sight should prove insipid and tasteless
" to him, if he had no one to commu-
" nicate, and tell his happiness to *."

THE same principle, therefore, which first engaged men to unite in *society*, made them afterwards strike out new forms of *association*, and such plans of polity and government, as appeared most suitable to

* Si quis Cœum ascendisset, naturamque mundi, pulchritudinem *siderum* prospexisset, insuavem eam admirationem ei fore, quæ jucundissima fuisset, si aliquem cui narraret, haberet. *Cicero de Amicitia*,

the circumstances of *time, place, degrees of population, &c.*

EVERY *social* instinct, every *connecting* principle of the mind, and *attracting* power of the soul, has its foundation in this one natural principle; and they are all to be considered as the modifications of that universal love of *self*, which reigns throughout the *sensitive* world.

LET us select a few of the most obvious and striking: *first*, That *sympathy*, which draws the sexes together; *secondly*, *Parental affection*; *thirdly*, *Filial love*; *fourthly*, *Friendship*; *fifthly*, *Compassion* to our *fellows-creatures*; and *lastly*, *Love of the public good*.

In the first place; what is that tender sentiment, which makes so fine a figure in *poetry, romance*, and the sublimer flights of *Platonic enthusiasm*?---Hobbes says, "It is the *love of one* singularly, with desire of being *singularly* beloved." Rochefoucault is more circumstantial: "In the *soul*, says he, it is a desire to *reign*; in the *mind*, it is *sympathy*; and in *bodies*, it is only a secret inclination to enjoy what one loves, after many difficulties." Sentiments all founded on the immediate love of *self*; and indeed so strong and powerful in their nature, that the Creator has thought proper

to rest the great object of the propagation of the *human*, as well as of every other *living* species, on this foundation.

Parental affection is equally the child of *Self-love*.---It flows more spontaneous to the mother's breast, than even those milky and vital streams, which she imparts so fondly to her babe. The more the dear babe approaches to a likeness with the parent, the more cherished and caressed. One is equally surprized, and pleased, to see one's self thus in a manner *reproduced*, and going to descend to a long series of generations; for this *living miniature*, it is imagined, will transmit to posterity a thousand little copies of its beloved original, the *parent*; and if he should happen not to bring an accession of power and dignity to the family, it is hoped, at least, that he will be a support and comfort to the *parent's* old age.

W H A T endearing connexions, what boundless effusions of benevolence are seen here to flow from this apparently dry and tenacious principle of *Self-love* !

HENCE it is that *parental affection* must yield in point of *merit* to *filial duty*; for this has difficulties, unknown to the former, to surmount and encounter. *Parental affection* is, as I have already said, spontaneous,

and interesting in every point of view; *filial duty*, in many respects, humiliating and burthenfome. *Obedience, discipline, and restraint*, the indispensable concomitants of the *filial* state, are not so relishing to human nature; and for this reason we must think it was, that God thought it necessary to make an exprefs injunction of *filial duty*, though not of *parental love*.

How much this affection partakes of the nature of *instinct*, we may judge by the poor *brute* itself. See here simple Nature acting without affectation or disguise! see how the *brute* parent, merely for its own sake, loves and cherishes it's *young*!---If the *bird* procures food and comfort for her little brood, is it not because the sight and possession of them fills her breast with an unspeakable *joy*, which she would fain perpetuate by their preservation? If the *dam* freely yields the pap to a circle of tender craving young ones, is it not partly, because the draught, at the same time that it relieves *their* pressing necessity, eases *her* vessels of a weight, which distended and incommoded them? And is she not often observed to flatter and invite her *young*, to do her this kindly office?

ADD to this the joy and satisfaction she feels in the possession of her little family,

and you will discover that this great *tenderness* and *love* for her *young*, is but the natural expression of the *love* she bears *herself*.

FOR a further confirmation of this, we may observe, that as the *young* advance in age and strength, the love of the *parent* visibly decreases, and is at length totally extinguished. Why? Because it is now become too difficult a task to supply their wants, or provide for their overgrown appetites and voracity, and because new passions are now springing up in the *parental* breast, which must be gratified, and the gratification of which is incompatible with the care of her *young*.

THE like would perhaps happen in the human species, if *reason*, and a certain anticipation of *futurity*, did not bear our *Self-love* forward to more distant scenes of contentment in the future *happiness* of the offspring.

FROM this it must appear, how diffident *parents* should be of their own sentiments with regard to their *children*, and how they should study to turn the excessive *fondness* they naturally feel for them, to their true, and best advantage, by withholding, on many occasions, that *instinctive condescension* and *indulgence*, which, if imprudently lavished,

and not dispensed with judgment and caution, is known to mar and enervate their tender minds, and produce such habits of *wilfulness* and *perverseness* as nothing can afterwards remove or conquer.

Filial duty itself, however difficult and humbling on many occasions, derives its origin from the same source. Whether it manifests itself in sentiments of *love*, or those of *fear*, the natural *principle* it flows from is still the same.

LET us suppose the former to be the case: is it not certain, that the happiness and preservation of the parent, which is the immediate object of *filial duty*, reflects *happiness* and *honour* on the child? But without taking this consideration into the account, is there not always, when filial duty is governed by *love*, a sentiment of *delight* inexpressible, which operates on the mind of the child, and leads him on sweetly, and almost irresistibly, to duty and obedience? His *personal* happiness is in this case immediately concerned, and the bitterest regret must then expiate the slightest *offence* offered to a parent.

How admirably is this expressed in what is related of the son of Cræsus, king of Lydia? It is said of this young prince, that on the day of battle, seeing one of the

enemy upon the point of giving his royal father a mortal blow, he, who had been dumb to that moment, was so agitated and affected, that he instantly broke through the impediment, which till then had tied up his tongue, and to the amazement of all about him, cried out "*Soldier ! kill not the king !*"

If we suppose *filial duty* under the immediate direction of *fear*, is it not apparent, that the desire of avoiding *punishment* or *censure*, is as powerful with some characters to enforce obedience, as real *affection* and *tenderness* is with others ? It is not, indeed, so laudable and generous a motive ; but yet it is useful to the general purpose of society, and undeniably a passion of *Self-love*.---

Is *friendship* itself (*friendship*, that sacred bond of union, and mutual attachment) more independent of, or less influenced by this principle?--A little reflection will also clear up this point.

WHAT were all the celebrated *friendships* of the *ancients* ; and if such attachments subsist still in our days, what are they in fact, but a mutual engagement of *reciprocal* kindness, or a noble commerce of heroic and exalted sentiments, in which each party aspires to the *gainer* ? Let me

be rightly understood : not in the external advantages of *riches, place, or fortune* ; but in the more exquisite and interesting feelings of *benevolence, generosity, and conscious magnanimity*.

SOULS of this noble stamp and exalted character, would blush to think they could be surpassed in *delicacy, or generosity* of sentiment. Hence that noble *emulation* to prevent all the possible desires and inclinations of the beloved friend, and sacrifice even one's own life to his preservation, or glory !

SUCH must a Paoli be, to judge from the outlines of that exalted character, traced out in Boswell's elegant Memoirs ; as conspicuous in the virtues of personal friendship, as in those of the patriot, and defender of national liberty !

BUT after all the fine things that may be said of the excellency and merit of friendship, it will be found, upon reflection, that its most striking appearances imply really no more than the more refined and delicate returns of *Self-love* : nor is any thing more just than what Rochefoucault hath observed on this subject, that we *can love nothing but on our own account* ; and that *we only follow our own taste and inclination, even when we prefer our friends to*

ourselves, though it is this preference, which alone constitutes true friendship. --- The merits, real or supposed, of the person we cherish, are indeed the object of our admiration and love: but taste and inclination, that is, the delight and joy this object inspires, the only internal motive of the passion itself.

Compassion, pity, fellow-feeling, which operate so powerfully in favour of the unfortunate and distressed, and are so great a support to the interests of the human society: what are all these precious sentiments founded upon?--- On the inward distress of our own minds, arising from the sight, or consideration, of other people's miseries; a secret pain and uneasiness, which we are naturally impatient to relieve, by removing as soon as may be the cause and occasion of it, that is, the misery and distress of others.

Amiable weakness! which obtains most in the weakest and most delicate constitutions, as in that of women and children, and extremely useful to the cause of humanity and society, by making us sensible to our mutual wants, and pressing home the duties of mutual succour, and effectual assistance. Even the hardest hearts are in some degree susceptible of these feelings. The Stoics alone, of all the ancient phi-

losophers, boasted themselves superior, and inaccessible to this amiable weakness.

It is pleasant enough to hear how these men *descanted* on this subject. “ *Pity* (says “ a great Stoic) is the *fault*, or *vice*, of a “ poor pusillanimous spirit, which the “ *basest* characters are susceptible of.--The “ *wise* (that is, in their sense) the *virtuous* “ man will look upon a beggar, labouring “ under all the distresses of poverty and “ infirmities of old age, with a countenance *unaltered*, and his heart *untouched* at “ the sight of the calamity. He will not “ *pity*, but he will relieve; and, like the “ Gods, look down with clemency on the “ miseries of poor mortals*.”

In this philosophical rant we may observe a mixture of *truth* and *falsehood*, of *sublimity* and *extravagance*.

THE *basest*, as well as the most *virtuous* characters are, it is true, susceptible of the impressions of *pity*: but it is not therefore

* Clementiam, mansuetudinemque omnes boni, præstabunt; misericordiam autem vitabunt: est enim vitium pusilli animi, ad speciem malorum alienorum succidentis. Itaque pessimo cuique familiarissima est. Ergo non miserebitur sapiens, sed succuret, sed proderit: vultum non dejiciet; non animum ob æriscantis alicujus aridam, ac pannosam maciem, et innixam baculo senectum.—Sed, DEORUM more, Calamitosos propitius respiciet. Seneca de Clementia, lib. 2.

to be deemed a *fault*, or *vice*, at least a *moral* one: it is in truth the *mechanical* effects of our frame and constitution, which takes place more or less in every character, and is the irresistible consequence of a reflection we instantly make (though perhaps *imperceptibly* to ourselves) that we are equally subject to the pains and miseries we see others labour under.

For a reason directly opposite to this, but founded on the same principle of *Self-love* and *Self-preservation*, we listen with pleasure to the recital of *shipwrecks*, or *battles*, wherein thousands of our countrymen have perished; viz. from a sense of our own *safety* and *present security*, as the *Spectator* some where observes.---Lucretius had made the same observation before.

“*Suave, mari magno, turbantibus æquora ventis,
E terra’ magnum alterius spectare laborem:
Non quia, vexari quemquam, est jucunda voluptas;
Sed, quibus ipse malis careas, quia cernere suave est.*”

“’Tis pleasant, when the seas are rough, to stand
And view another’s *danger*, safe at land:
Not ’cause he’s *troubled*; but ’tis *sweet* to see
Those *cares* and *fears*, from which *ourselves* are *free*.”

CREECH.

THERE is no *fault* even in this indeliberate sense of *joy* at our own *safety*, though arising from the sight of other people’s

distress, any more than in the *pain* we feel upon reflecting on their misfortune: for both these effects are equally instantaneous and irresistible. The *fault* in either case would be, *first*, If we should suffer ourselves to sink so much under the weight of *pain*, as to become incapable of relieving the distressed we commiserate, or contenting ourselves with merely commiserating, without inclining to relieve the distressed. *Secondly*, If the *pleasure*, we naturally feel at the recital of shipwrecks and bloody battles, should betray us into sentiments of pusillanimity and cowardice, and make us shrink from our duty on occasions of *public* danger, or calamity: for then these sentiments, which in themselves are natural, indeliberate, and irreprehensible, would degenerate into *vice*, and a narrow and contemptible *selfishness*.

AGAIN: it belongs to magnanimity and true greatness of soul, to raise the mind above the first impressions of *pain* and *weakness*, which we call *compassion*, *pity*, &c. and shew a serenity of countenance and temper, amid the troubles and weaknesses that surround us; that we may be able to direct these feelings, as *nature* and *reason* prescribe, to our own greater good and the public utility.

IN this sense Seneca's remark is *solid* and *sublime*; in any other, *extravagant* and *ridiculous*.---Greatness of soul does not consist in what the Stoics called *apathy*, or an affected insensibility; but in the command of our passions and feelings, and the efforts we made towards directing them to the great end, which Nature had in view, when she made us susceptible of such impressions.---How must Pompey the Great have been astonished, when he heard the famous philosopher of Rhodes, (who was that moment in a racking fit of the *gout*) declare, that *he felt no pain*, or, that *pain was in itself no evil!*

THERE is no wisdom in attempting to force, or reverse the nature of things. Our nature, which is essentially limited and imperfect, is surrounded with *wants* which necessarily give *uneasiness* and *pain*, until they are removed, or relieved; and in spite of all the Stoic's pride, and all the *modern* Platonists boasted delicacy, there is nothing more true, than the most generous and active *compassion*, that ever possessed the human breast, had its first rise in the *weakness* and *actual distress* of the mind, in the manner above-mentioned.

OF these *wants* and natural *weaknesses*, some are fully answered by our own im-

mediate preservation; others (as *compassion*, and *fellow-feeling*) are to be relieved only by contributing, as much as in us lies, to the relief and ease of our *fellow-creatures*; and were consequently given for the good of *society* in general.

Love and *zeal* for the *public good* is the last principle we are here to examine. What immense labours have not some public-spirited men voluntarily undergone, to raise their native country to a state of independency and glory? What application have they not chained themselves down to? To what imminent dangers have they not, on many occasions, exposed their lives, families, and fortunes; and what sacrifices have they not made of all that was most dear to them, to secure this one great object?

THIS great zeal for the *public good* shone forth particularly in the first heroes of the Roman republic. Torquatus sentences his own *son* to death, for having, contrary to orders, encountered one of the enemy in single combat; thus sacrificing his *paternal love* to the *good* of the *public* and the maintenance of military discipline in the Roman camp. The three *Decii* devoted themselves, successively, in three great battles, to a certain death, by rushing *singly* into the thick of the enemy, when

the issue of the battle was doubtful; from a patriotic enthusiasm, and persuasion, that the Gods, in admiration of their virtue, would save the army from destruction.--- Could so much *self-denial* have taken its rise in *Self-love*?

YES, I must again answer: the love of *true glory*, that is the *pleasing* consideration of the *public good*, which was to be the fruit of their disinterestedness and contempt of life; together with the flattering prospect of a great *name* with posterity, was what inspired these generous resolutions. *Virgil* has nobly expressed this truth in the following line:

— *Vincit amor patriæ, laudumque immensa Cupido.*

I SHALL here content myself with this one general reason, and think I do honour to the memory of these great men by suppressing other motives of a less brilliant nature, which may be naturally supposed to have had a share in the above-mentioned resolutions. But even this, which we have assigned, exalted and generous as it really was, is evidently reducible to the principle we have been all along contending for.

BUT does not all this overturn the true idea of VIRTUE, *public*, as well as *private*? Or what degree of *merit* can we suppose in

any act of *virtue* whatsoever, if it essentially implies this *love of ourselves*, this *self-interested* view, and regard to our *personal* gratification? --- The modern Platonists, and particularly my Lord Shaftesbury, talk with the greatest contempt of this great principle of Nature, and will allow it no share in the composition of *virtue*. But *Nature* will speak, and make her voice be understood, when their works, and perhaps their names, shall be forgotten.

BUT, in short, how reconcile these seemingly opposite principles? Or what is the true idea, and nature of *virtue*? --- This we are to discuss in the following chapter.

C H A P. IX.

True notion of virtue : how stripped of its most powerful sanctions by Epicurus. --- Character of this philosopher. --- Fatal influence of his doctrine on the States of Greece and Rome.

WE now enter upon a large and delightful field of speculation, where we shall see the philosophers proposing their various systems and plans of reasoning;

some endeavouring to establish *virtue* on the *passions*, and human *affections* under the direction of a *contracted* and *short-sighted reason*; that is, that portion of *reason*, which terminates in our immediate *preservation* and *present security*. Some founding it on *abstract reasoning* and *imagination*, divested of those feelings, and weaknesses, which make so great a part of our very *existence*, and aspiring always to something above the standard of *humanity*.---Others, in short, (and these indeed the only true followers of *Nature* and *Truth*) on the joint principles of human *affections*, and an *enlightened reason*; whereof the first is always impelling us to the general pursuit of *happiness* and *enjoyment*, and the second pointing out, and smoothing the way to *immortality*.

THIS last is what I have called in the title page, *Rational Self-love*. These two principles must always go hand in hand.

We are neither to demean ourselves to the level of the *brute* kind, which know no guide or rule but that of *passion* and *instinct*; nor yet presumptuously to aspire to the condition of angels, and superior beings, whose nature is exempt and disengaged from the weaknesses of our composition.--The Epicurians ran into the former ex-

treme ; the Stoics and Platonists, into the latter ; particularly the Platonists of our days, Lord Shaftesbury, Mr. Hutchinson, and others ; men of more delicacy and refinement than true taste, or real judgment.

IT is a thing of the utmost importance, in the doctrine of *morals*, to ascertain with exactness the principles of human action. The generality of mankind perceive, indeed, by *sentiment*, what is *right*, and what *wrong* ; that is, by the *joy* and *delight* that accompanies and follows the practice of *virtue*, they feel its conformity with *rational nature*, and the general order of things ; as by the *trouble* and *uneasiness*, inseparable from *vice*, they are made sensible of its opposition to both. But as certain reasoners and free-thinkers have, and do daily abuse this principle to their own purposes, it is incumbent on the lovers of truth to prove, by a faithful exposition of the philosophical principles of *virtue*, the truth and reality of its existence and power ; and shew it to be as superior to the contracted notions of the Epicurian philosophy, as it is independent of the arbitrary conceptions and imaginations of our modern Platonists.

Virtue therefore, considered immediately in itself, is that firm and generous purpose of the mind, by which we are disposed to

undergo some considerable *present labour* and *distress*, in order to ward off *future* and greater evil; or to forego some immediate, and considerable *gratification*, with the view of obtaining a *future* and *greater* good.---

THIS notion of *virtue* is founded in the nature of man, who is equally possessed of *sensibility* and *reason*, and to whom *reason* was given to direct him to his *greater good*, and second, in the most effectual manner, his *sensibility*.

In this definition of *virtue* we have attended only to the idea of the thing itself, without specifying what that *good* is which, above all others, we should aspire to; or what that greatest of *evils*, which we should endeavour above all others to avoid. This is best known, and indeed can only be known, with certainty, from *Divine revelation*; and the communications of that *Supreme Being*, who holds in himself all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. *The summum bonum* of this life, that is the sum total of natural *happiness* in our power to acquire or merit, is *content* of mind, a *good character*, and a *conscious innocence*; our *greatest evil*, and which is in our power to prevent or avoid, *discontent*, *infamy*, and *conscious guilt*. It belongs to *virtue* to

forego every gratification incompatible with the former, and suffer any present inconvenience that may tend to avert the latter.

WE shall hereafter enquire what obligation we are under of cultivating these *virtuous* dispositions; whence this *obligation* arises; and what it is, in fact, that gives so much *peace* and *security* to the *virtuous* mind, so much *uneasiness* and *disquietude* to the *vicious*?---The Epicurians overlooked this essential point; their followers, our modern *free-thinkers*, think they shew a becoming spirit, and a truly philosophical courage, in suppressing, or despising it.

THE natural principles, however, which Epicurus laid down, and his method of tracing the operations of the soul to their genuine source, is indisputably just; and from its simplicity and plainness, infinitely preferable to the refined and affected systems of all the other philosophers.

IN Tully's first book *de Finibus* we have a curious dialogue between this elegant philosopher, and Torquatus, a noble Roman, who had adopted the system of Epicurus. Tully attacks him with great art and power of eloquence; Torquatus defends his cause with equal force, and a greater appearance of truth and candor. His defence

consists in a simple recital of the principles on which Epicurus was wont to reason ; and his discourse is so plain, and so much to the purpose, that I shall make no scruple of giving the substance of it here to the reader : to which I must premise, that the great hinge, on which all the Epicurean philosophy turned, was *pain* and *pleasure*.

---“ To make it appear (says Torquatus) how much those men are mistaken, who make profession of rejecting *pleasure*, and recommending *pain* (he squints here at the Stoics) I shall here deliver the true sentiment of Epicurus.---”

“ No man can hate, or reject *pleasure*, merely because it is *pleasure*, or an agreeable sensation ; but because the *indiscreet* love and pursuit of *pleasure* is attended with many *disagreeable* consequences. Nor does any one love, or choose to undergo *pain* merely for the sake of *pain* itself ; but because *pleasure* and *happiness* are on many occasions to be obtained only by the means of *pain* and *suffering*.”

“ To speak even of those things which happen in the ordinary course of life ; which of us all can say that he is willing to undergo even a little fatigue of body, without a view to some consequent ad-

vantage? Or who can justly find fault with that man, who lays himself out for the enjoyment of any kind of *pleasure*, from which no *evil* consequence whatsoever is to follow †? Or with him, who endeavours to subtract himself from *pain*, when his submitting to it can bring him no sort of *pleasure*, or *advantage?*”

“ WE must, indeed, condemn those men, who, blinded by the allurements of present and immediate enjoyment, take no pains to consider on the pernicious consequences of such a scheme of life; or, who through a spirit of pusillanimity and weakness, and for fear of undergoing a little labour and hardship, neglect their obligations and duties of life.---This, therefore, (concludes Torquatus) should be the *wise man's* rule of conduct; to *forego* some *present* en-

† Here it must be observed, that the reason why it is forbid by the law of *Nature* to indulge *pleasure*, but under certain rules and restrictions, is, because the indiscriminate gratification of *pleasure* would be destructive to our own, and the public happiness, and consequently contrary to the institution of God, who is the founder and ruler of *Nature*.—The more consonant, or repugnant any act or practice is to the *end* here mentioned, the more praise-worthy, or reprehensible it is in itself, and the more conformable or repugnant to the law of *Nature*, and the institution of God.—This last consideration was not attended to by the Epicureans.

joyment for the sake of obtaining *future* and *greater* happiness; or *suffer* some immediate *trouble* and *inconvenience*, in order ward off *evils* of greater weight in time to come.*"---

NOTHING, I should think, more clear, natural and easy, than this way of reasoning: and thus far the Epicureans were certainly in the right. But the application which Torquatus makes of these general principles, when he comes to account for the great actions of the first Roman heroes, is not always equally happy.

“Do you imagine (says he to Tully) that these great men had nothing *personal* in view, when they exposed themselves to

* *Nemo voluptatem, quia voluptas fit, aspernatur, aut odit, aut fugit; sed quia consequuntur magni dolores eos, qui ratione voluptatem sequi nesciunt.—Neque porro quisquam est, qui dolorem ipsum, quia dolor fit, amet, confectetur, adipisci velit; sed quia nonnumquam ejusmodi incidunt tempora, ut labore et dolore magnam aliquam quærat voluptatem, &c.—At vero eos at accusamus, et justo odio dignissimos ducimus, qui blanditiis præsentium voluptatum deliniti atque corrupti, quos dolores, quas molestias excepturi sint, occæcati cupiditate non provident: similique sunt in culpa, qui officia deserunt mollitia animi, i. e. laborum et dolorum fuga. Itaque harum rerum hic tenetur a Sapiēte delectus, aut ut rejiciendis voluptatibus majores alias consequatur; aut perferendis doloribus asperiores repellat.—De Finib. L. I.*

all the dangers of war, and single combat, and exercised such unrelenting severity on their own *blood* and *children*? I must say, without the least doubt or hesitation, that it was not the *bare name* of *virtue*, that inspired and gave birth to those noble achievements. The first Torquatus (so called from a golden *collar* † which he took from a Gaul of great stature and prowess, whom he killed in single combat) had undoubtedly an eye to this noble trophy, when he ventured to encounter that formidable champion, and he immediately put it on himself for his defence, during the remainder of the action.”

THIS, however, by the way, was no great object for a *hero*: but our philosopher goes on:

“ He exposed himself (*you* say) to infinite danger!--True: but it was in the view of the whole Roman army; and he acquired, by this single action, the esteem of all his countrymen, and an immortal reputation.---He put his own *son* to *death*!---If without just cause (replies our Torquatus) I should be sorry to be descended from so cruel a man: but if he made this sacrifice for the sake of maintaining the

† *Torques* in Latin signifies a *collar*.

military discipline, and keeping the army by this example of severity within the proper bounds, particularly at a time so very critical and dangerous ; I must conclude that he consulted in this the *public safety*, in which he knew *his own* was included §."

THIS latter part of Torquatus's reasoning is just, and to the purpose. But there is not a word in all his discourse of the *motive* deduced from the consideration of a *future life*, or the superintendence of a DEITY.

§ Hanc ego cum teneam sententiam, quid est cur verear, ne ad eam possim accomodare Torquatos nostros?—Quorum facta quemadmodum, quæso, interpretaris? Siccine eos censes aut in armatum hostem impetum fecisse, aut in liberos aut in sanguinem suum, crudeles fuisse, nihil ut de *utilitatibus*, nihil ut de *commodis suis* cogitarent? Tu tam egregios viros censes tantas res gessisse sine causa?—Quæ fuerit causa, mox videro: interea hoc tenebo; si ob aliquam causam ista, quæ sine dubio præclara sunt, fecerint, *virtutem* his, per se ipsam, causam non fuisse.—Torquem detraxit hosti; et quidem *se texit*, ne *interiret*.—At magnum *periculum* adiit!—In oculis quidem *exercitus*. Quid ex eo consequutus est? *Laudem* et *caritatem*; quæ sunt vitæ sine metu degendæ præsidia firmissima.—*Filium* morte multavit!—Si sine causa, nollem me ab eo ortum, tam importuno, tamque crudeli: sin ut *dolore suo* sanciret militaris imperii disciplinam, exercitumque in gravissimo bello *animadversionis* metu contineret, salutem prospexit *civium*, qua intelligebat contineri *suam*. Ibid.—

The Epicurean system even positively excluded this most important tenet, and thereby stript *virtue* of those powerful *sanctions*, which must ever be its greatest support.--- The Gods (said Epicurus) wrapt up in *themselves*, and the enjoyment of *beatitude*, all-sufficient to themselves, and totally *independent* of us *mortals*, live in an eternal and uninterrupted *repose*, inaccessible to the *cares*, or *transactions* of this *low world*, and equally insensible to the *virtues* or *vices*, the *happiness* or *miseries* of men :---

*Omnis enim per se DIVUM natura necesse est
Immortali ævo summa cum pace fruatur,
Semota ab nostris rebus, sejunctaque longe ;
Nam privata dolore omni, privata periculis,
Ipsa suis pollens opibus, nihil indiga nostri,
Nec bene promeritis capitur, nec tangitur ira.*

LUCR. L. I.

WE must not, however, imagine, that Epicurus placed *happiness* in the enjoyment of *sensual pleasures*, as Tully would make us believe : Torquatus sufficiently refutes this calumny, by quoting the words of the letter which Epicurus wrote to his friend Hermachus on his death-bed ; in which he tells him, that, “ *though he suffered exquisite pain of body, yet he found himself sufficiently happy in his mind, from the joy and comfort, which the remembrance of his past actions, and rational conduct in life, now gave him.*”

In fact, it appears, notwithstanding the dangerous tendency of his philosophical system, and the prejudice which must naturally arise in the mind against him on this account, that Epicurus carried himself with great regularity and decency through life; was courteous, humane, and remarkably temperate. Tully himself acknowledges this truth; and further owns, that he was acquainted with some of the Epicurean sect, who were men of undoubted worth and merit.

HE at the same time very justly observes, that this was rather owing to their own good dispositions and happy turn of mind, than the influence of the philosophical principles they made profession of, which rather tended to a general licentiousness of manners.

IT was, in fact, in this school that Cæsar received the first rudiments of those pernicious principles, which corrupted his mind, and vitiated all his great qualities; that avowed contempt of the Gods, and of the laws of public *justice*, whenever he thought they clashed with his *personal* interest; that dissoluteness of manners, which brought upon him the opprobrious appellation of "*Omnium mulierum vir; omnium virorum mulier.*" Sueton. That intemperance

of ambition, which made him seek his own elevation in the ruins of his country, and the liberties of mankind: for it is well known, that Cæsar made his own *elevation*, and *immediate pleasures*, the center of all his views and undertakings.

How prodigiously did this sect fall away from the views of its first founder and institutor!--But how could it be otherwise? A structure raised on a foundation of sand: a philosophical system without *motive*, or at least, a sufficient motive to keep the passions in awe, and direct them to their proper end; a *morality*, (if we may so call it) that stifled the seeds of immortality, and the strongest sentiments of rational nature! Could such a system in the nature of things have any long duration? Or if it subsisted for some time among a certain set of men, what could it produce at best, but some feeble efforts of patriotism in the *benevolent*, refinement of taste in the *voluptuous*, or love of ease and philosophy in the *contemplative* mind? But as for those virtues, which demanded any remarkable degree of *self denial*, obstinate perseverance in *labour*, and an inviolable fidelity to the dictates of *justice* and *probity* (in cases where a breach of trust might be expected to pass with secrecy and impunity)

the doctrine of Epicurus held out no motive equal to the general performance of these arduous duties.

THE great examples of fortitude, disinterestedness, and patriotism, which dignify the annals of ancient Greece and Rome, were in effect laid upon a deeper foundation, than Epicurus, or his too faithful disciple, the ingenious and bold Lucretius, were willing to acknowledge: *religion, respect for the Gods, and a prospect of immortality* (sentiments, which all the art of sophistry and passion can never wrest from the soul) made the principal part of that early, and manly education and discipline, which raised these illustrious states to that height of glory, which still, at this distance, strikes us with respect and admiration.

To be convinced of this, we need but cast an eye on Plutarch's Lives.--But from the time that the philosophy of Epicurus came into vogue in Greece and Rome, what an amazing change in the general character, as well as the principles of men! and with what rapidity did these states fall away from their former splendor and power! Nothing, but the virtue of Julius Cæsar's immediate successor, could give even a temporary support to the dignity of the Roman name. As for the states of Greece,

they immediately fell a prey to the tyranny of *individuals*, or expired in the convulsions of *anarchy*.

WHOEVER is desirous of making an application of these remarks to the present times, may consult the judicious Dr. Brown's Estimate of the *Times*, and his later treatise, on *liberty* and *licentiousness*.

Epicurus flourished about three hundred years before the Christian Æra. He is said to have wrote a vast number of books; though none of his works are come down to us. The learned Gassendi however has collected from different authors the substance of his doctrine, and purged it of the *impieties* it contained. Corrected thus and adapted to the standard of the *Christian* truth, it forms a very rational and pleasing system of philosophy. It is however, pretty remarkable, that whilst Gassendi in France was employed in drawing all the advantage he possibly could, from the first general principles of the Epicurean philosophy, another great reasoner in England took up the same principles with all their horrid train of *errors* and *impiety*---I mean the ill-fated Hobbes.

C H A P. X.

*Parallel between Epicurus and Hobbes.
Their impiety refuted.*

IT is indeed a melancholy reflection, that a man like Hobbes (that is, a man of genius, and who had been brought up in the principles of CHRISTIANITY) should have sucked in all the *poison* of this fatal philosophy, and even added to its *malignity*! For, according to him, man was not only born with a *desire* of *happiness*, and innate *love* of *himself*, but this *natural* disposition must necessarily make him think *himself*, individually, the *centre* of the *universe*; and his *immediate happiness* the only *term*, to which all his views must tend.

WHAT was *mutual commerce*, and *human society* in general, in his opinion?---Not the institution of *Nature*, or that, to which the nature and order of things directly led us; but the mere work of *chance*, which shewed us, that *mutual commerce* was the surest means of securing our *personal happiness*; or rather that of *force* and *superior power*, to which men were at last glad to yield and submit, rather than remain exposed to the violence of every *individual*; and this *superior power* once constituted and formed,

compelled the multitude every where to submit to *laws* which *Nature* in a state of *freedom*, and left to herself, always disavows.

“ HENCE, *immediate convenience*, according to this philosopher, is the only *rule of right*; and no other obligation of obeying those laws of *society* which are found to obstruct our private views of *profit* or *gratification*, but the *dread of punishment*, and the sword of *justice* that hangs over our heads.”

WOULD it be, then, *blameless* in a man to decline the observance of such laws, or even openly violate them, if it could be done with *impunity*? To destroy a *friend*, a *parent*, or the *prince* himself, if their destruction could be a means of securing one's *private happiness*, or *independency*?

HOBBS' doctrine directly opens the way to all these dreadful consequences: for, though he says, that the *prince* may impose what laws he thinks proper, or judges necessary for the good of the community, yet he adds, that if any *particular* has committed a *crime*, by which he is become obnoxious to *capital* punishment, he may then substract himself from the obedience and fidelity he swore to the *prince*, and even enter into combination with others, like himself, to repel *force* by *force*; and

that *hostilities* of this nature, when undertaken in defence of one's *life* and *person*, are in every case *just*, and warranted by *Nature*. Leviathan : p. 2. c. 21. And in his book De Cive : c. 2. n. 11, he asserts, that in such cases all prior contracts and agreements become *void* and *null* ; because then the transgressor is again restored to the *simple state* of *Nature*, in which *man* is to *man* a *wolf*, and a beast of *prey*.--

WHAT a savage philosophy!--It is indeed, by so much the more surprising from the pen of Hobbes, as he is represented to have been a man of a humane and gentle disposition. But there is no knowing how far a wrong principle, or even a right one, when once misapplied and misunderstood, may lead an incautious or presumptuous reasoner.

HOBBS went farther astray in this respect than perhaps Epicurus himself. His monstrous whimsey concerning the *primitive state* of *Nature*, in which he supposes that each *individual* was to every other a *wolf*, a *destroyer*, a beast of *prey*, &c. is indeed taken from Lucretius; but we may, I think, justly suspect that Lucretius here exaggerates the point, and that Epicurus himself did not go so far: for the more moderate Epicureans, and particularly Tor-

quatus; in the place above mentioned, seem to have laid it down as a principle, that we are all born with *social* dispositions; that *society* is as a *prop* to the natural weakness and indigency of our state; and that from the *fortuitous* arrangement of things, which took place in the beginning, human nature happens to be so constituted, that each *individual* must necessarily seek his *happiness* in the general *well-being* of his *species*, or at least of the particular society into which he is incorporated.

It was, indeed, by *chance*, (said Epicurus) and without any *design* of *Providence*, that man was thus constituted and formed: The *eye* itself, according to him, was not formed for *seeing*, nor the *ear* for *bearing*, nor the *feet* for *walking*.---How then were all these things produced?---Why, one *fortuitous* motion of the *atoms* must have produced a *leg*, another a *thigh*, and so on to the *head*; into which some lucky stroke of *chance* at last threw an *eye*, a *nose*, and an *ear*; and thus the wonderful machine of man was accidentally fitted to *see*, *bear*, *smell*, &c. till come at length to a proper degree of maturity, he luckily burst forth from his mother *earth*, and began effectually to move, see, &c."

ALL this is *wonderous*, indeed; but, (said the Epicureans), the work of *chance* being at length happily completed, and *human* nature thrown into a certain *mould*, things have ever since gone on in an uniform manner; and every man is born with a disposition to *social* life, and a love to his *species*, because this mutual commerce is useful, and even necessary to his preservation and well-being.

NOTHING, therefore, according to these more moderate Epicureans, but the resentment of injuries received, and a desire of repairing the wrongs done us by other individuals, should provoke us to acts of *hostility* against them; and our constant study should be, from the sole motive of our present happiness and safety, to improve and strengthen, by every possible means, the sacred bonds of *sociableness*, *peace* and *common union*.---"

BUT *virtue* has a higher claim to our respect and veneration, than can appear from any thing said by these impious philosophers. It is true, that it has for *object* the *happiness* of the individual *agent*, and that of the whole *human* species, as connected with that of the *individual*: But this *connexion* was not the result of *chance*, or a mere *accidental* tie: It was the work of

wisdom and *design*, which originally ordered matters so, as to have established in the very *nature* of things a reciprocal and invariable connexion between the happiness of *individuals* and that of the *whole species*.

THE *virtue* of *individuals*, animated and directed by this supreme wisdom, first planned our *general laws*, and forms of government, tending to produce as much *public* happiness, as the nature and circumstances of things would permit, or bear; and it is again to the happy influence of these general laws, that *individuals* owe their *personal* safety and happiness, and the liberty they enjoy of bringing into action every faculty and power, which they have received from nature, for their own, and the public utility.

To suppose a state of nature *repugnant* to these *original* principles and dispositions in man, as Hobbes and Lucretius did, is willfully to invert the plain order of things, and even degrade *human* nature to a state much inferior to that of any of the *brute* creation. All these undoubtedly act upon the simple instinct of *nature*; which even without the assistance of *reason*, directs them to some kind of *social* life. The most *solitary* and *gloomy* among them live at least in an union of *two*, the *male* and *female*: and

those that herd in greater numbers, live together in harmony : even *lions* and *bears* agree perfectly with those of their own species ; “ *Sævis inter se convenit urfis.* ” --- Their natural *wants*, and the desire of *relieving* these *wants*, directly lead them to this kind of *society*.

MUST *man* alone have been born without *social* instincts ? And to reason even upon mere *mechanical* principles, as Hobbes did, can we suppose human nature so perfect in itself, that the individuals of this species shall have no natural *wants*, or desire to supply and relieve them, by mutual *commerce* and *society* ? No : the principles of *sociableness* are knit into the first elements of human nature, and spring immediately from the *limitation* and *imperfection* of our existence and being.

THIS alone were sufficient to make us *sociable* ; nor do we require any violence or compulsion from *superior powers* to force us to what we so naturally desire ourselves. But then the true knowledge or science of *social* life is to be learned only from experience and reflection ; and in some cases from *divine revelation* alone. --- For instance, the perfect forgiveness of *injuries* and cordial love even of our *enemies*, are virtues of the greatest utility to human society ; but what

reflection, or human reasoning could have led us to the knowledge and acknowledgement of these salutary, but arduous maxims? Has not *revenge* been even sanctified, and consecrated by most nations into a *virtue*?---

BUT from whatever source our knowledge of the true principles of *social* life is supposed to flow, certain it is, that the more care and pains we take to strengthen and improve the means of cultivating *society*, and contributing to the happiness of our fellow-creatures, the *happier* we shall be *ourselves*; and the application we bestow on this interesting object is real *virtue*.

WITH this view, and for this end, we willingly forego many present and immediate gratifications, and submit with cheerfulness to difficulties and hardships, which, considered immediately in themselves, are extremely disagreeable. This is, indeed, *Self-Love*; or grounded immediately on that principle: but this *Self-Love* is Rational, and becoming the dignity of our nature. As on the other hand, the invariable order and regularity, with which it operates on the human mind, is an irresistible proof and demonstration of an all-wise, all-good, and eternal *Providence* reigning over us, and directing the private,

and even the most secret virtues of the *individual*, to the production of general happiness.

WHAT monstrous and wretched absurdities have not the enemies of this most comforting and momentous of all tenets (the doctrine of a supreme *Providence*) been driven to! They are indeed such as can scarce be believed; and cannot be read without horror. Equally absurd in their *physical* and *moral* reasonings, these presumptuous philosophers have every where reversed the natural order of things; enthroned *blind chance* in the seat of *wisdom* and *providence*, and deprived human *society* of its sole immediate defence, the *conscience* of *individuals*. In vain then must God roll his thunders, in vain conscience proclaim the intimate presence of the Deity, and hear and feel those awful dictates, that point out the eternal and invariable rule of *right* and *wrong*! Lucretius, after Epicurus, laughs at all these childish fears: for so he calls them----

“ *Primus in Orbe DEOS fecit Timor*——”

HE cannot allow, or see that these fears are grounded on our inward sense and feeling of a *wisdom* and *power*, superior to our own, independent of us, and in which

we *live, move, and breathe!* Or if any such *supreme* Being exists, he meddles not, (says this impious philosopher) with this low world; he is ignorant of what passes here below; or insensible to the condition of beings at this infinite distance from him: and *blind chance* alone, which first blew up *man* like a *mushroom*, out of the bosom of the earth, is to direct his fate, and determine the manner of his life and end!

HOBBS, the philosophical monster of our later days, will on the other hand allow no *contract*, or *agreement*, however solemnly made, to be *valid* or *binding*; but pronounces every act of the kind *null* and *void*, from the moment that our *personal* safety is endangered by the observance of it; though this danger should arise from our own *guilt*, and voluntary transgression, or violation of the contract. To this maxim of Hobbes, the inimitable author of *Hudibras* alludes, in the following lines.-----

“ *Oaths* are but *words*, and *words* but *wind*,

“ Too feeble instruments to *bind*.”

Conscience, then, is but an empty sound; a vain *prejudice* formed on the errors of our childhood! and it is a mistake--what do I say!--It is (according to this philosopher) an insult on human reason to pretend, that we are indispensably bound by any law of

nature to the observance of those rules of fidelity, justice, and equity, commonly received in the world!

WITH what an ill grace does Hobbes, after this, pretend to draw the proofs of some of his paradoxes from *Holy Writ*! From some passages in the Book of Kings, and other parts of the Scripture, he takes upon him to advance, that kings have an undoubted right to govern the people with an arbitrary sway, and treat them at discretion.---What is this in the mouth of a man, who denied every principle of *conscience*, and the doctrine of a special *providence*, but downright mockery? After a professed avowal of these impious sentiments, what stress could he have laid on the *authenticity* of the holy writings, or of any *divine* revelation at all?---But *error* is always inconsistent with itself.

A LIKE inconsistency was observed in Epicurus: though he expressly disavowed the *providence* of the Gods, yet he frequented their *temples*; which gave occasion to one of his adversaries to say, that "Jupiter never appeared greater in his eyes, than when he saw Epicurus on his *knees* before him." Hobbes, again, with all his philosophical courage, and contempt of vulgar *prejudices*, was always in great dread

of *spirits* and *phantoms*, infomuch, that he would never lye alone in a room.

NEED I make an apology for this digression?--I cannot think the judicious reader will consider it as unseasonable; it was necessarily connected with my subject; and I should rather have thought it unpardonable in me to omit it, as it is pretty evident, that Lucretius and Hobbes are the two grand sources from which the torrent of modern *infidelity* has broke forth, and overflowed the land. I mean among the *learned*; and those who would appear as capable of reasoning for themselves, and forming new *systems* of philosophical religion. As to that *practical infidelity*, which the *passions* suggest, it takes its rise in another source; and its growth must be imputed to the general relaxation of *manners* and *discipline* among us.

C H A P. XI.

The idea of virtue, above delivered, illustrated in some particular instances.---Lord Shaftesbury's scheme considered.

IT must by this time sufficiently appear to the reader, that VIRTUE, considered as a general principle of action, has always some future happiness in view to be obtained, either by securing some considerable *good*, or warding off some justly dreaded *evil*.

NOR is this in the least invalidated by what has been said (Chap. vii.) concerning that most perfect act of the *love* of God, which should still operate in all its force and energy in the supposition even of an immediate, and total *annihilation*; though this supposition should preclude all hope of subsequent *happiness*. For this is a particular supposition, which cannot be said to have any relation to the general conduct of life; and cannot consequently serve as proof or foundation to any general principle of action. What I here mean is, that VIRTUE, considered in this last sense, has always future *good* in view.

FORTITUDE endures, TEMPERANCE forbears, JUSTICE distributes with a severe impartiality.---Why all this *labour*, all this *self-denial*, and *rigour* to one's self? ---The man of fortitude will not depart from his just rights, or the *honourable* purpose he has in view. He is not intimidated by *difficulties* and *dangers*--Why? because they are the means of preserving and securing what is most dear to him, his *friends*, his *country*, and his *reputation*.---The *temperate* man chearfully foregoes many gratifications of *sense* and *appetite*, to preserve or recover the inestimable blessings of *health* and *innocence*.---And the *just* man, who readily resigns what is not his own, and makes no scruple of displeasing others by obliging them to do the same, has at the same time an eye both to the security of his own *property* from the depredations of *avarice*, and the tranquility of his *conscience*; advantages much more desirable and lasting, than any temporary accession of ill-got wealth, or the fluctuating and precarious *favour* of self-interested men.

THE two necessary conditions of VIRTUE are, therefore, *sufferance* and *forbearance*; *sustinere et abstinere*; and to deserve the name of *virtuous*, we must be prepared both to undertake what

is difficult and arduous, and deny ourselves what may be for the present most grateful and pleasing, but always for some *laudable* end.

VIRTUE, then, is a species of *traffic*, or *negociation*, in which we are employed in weighing *good* against *good*, and *evil* against *evil*!---Why not, if *happiness* is to be *purchased*, and if it be the prize of virtue?---There is no degree of happiness or contentment to be obtained without this kind of *negociation*.

“ ARE you under any concern (says the
 “ sage and witty Epictetus) that another
 “ has been *invited* to a great man’s table
 “ in preference to you, or *saluted* when
 “ you are not noticed, or honoured with
 “ his *intimacy*, whilst you lye neglected?
 “ ---Consider, you are not to expect the
 “ same favours and distinctions, when you
 “ have not deserved them as well as he.
 “ Have you been as *assiduous* and *com-*
 “ *plaisant*, as the other?--Do you take care
 “ to pay your respects at a seasonable hour
 “ to the *great man*; to attend his *levee*;
 “ to *admire* and *praise* every thing about
 “ him?--Must you not think yourself very
 “ unreasonable to expect the like dis-
 “ tinguishing marks of his *favour*, when
 “ you have not paid the stated *price* for

“ them?--These things are purchased by
“ *complaisance* and *flattery*. If you think
“ them worth the purchase, pay it; if
“ not, why complain, or repine? Have
“ you nothing in the place of that grand
“ *entertainment*, that kind *salutation*? &c.
“ ---Yes: you have refused your admira-
“ tion and praise, where you did not think
“ it *due*: you have not exposed yourself to
“ the haughty airs of that proud man:
“ you have preserved your dignity.---”

BUT to shew, in a yet stronger light, the truth of what we have advanced, I shall here instance in even *religion* itself.---Had not the *martyrs* an eternal crown of *glory* in view, when they so chearfully embraced *death* with all his train of horrors, rather than renounce their faith? They magnanimously seized, and immoveably held, the arduous, but sure road to lasting happiness: whilst weaker Christians suffered themselves to fall away from this grand hope; and trod a softer way, to grasp a shining bubble.

THIS opens an easy way to the solution of the difficulty above mentioned: viz. What degree of *merit* can we suppose in any act of *virtue* whatsoever, if it necessarily implies this regard to *ourselves*, and *self-interested* view?---Does not this seem en-

tirely to overthrow the idea of Christian *obedience*; and that implicit and perfect submission which we owe to the will of the Creator in preference to *our own*; and consequently, the sublime doctrine of future *rewards*? &c.

THE reader, I think, will scarce suspect, that such an objection could have been made use of, as an argument against Christianity; and yet this affected delicacy about the idea and nature of *virtue*, which appears every where throughout the *Characteristics*, and seems indeed to form the very spirit of that work, was in my Lord Shaftesbury nothing less than a settled aversion to the doctrines of Christianity; among which that of *future rewards* and *punishments* stands foremost.

“ THIS noble writer (says Doctor Brown, “ in his *Essay on the Characteristics*) viewing the brighter parts of human nature “ through the amiable medium of the “ So- “ cratic philosophy, entirely discards *Self- “ Love* from his system of *virtue*, and will “ allow it no share in that sublime and God- “ like composition.”--In *virtue*, according to him, all is *innate* and *intrinsic* beauty, harmony, proportion, &c. unconnected with, and independent of, every consequence of *utility* or *reward*. But this

favourite appellation, borrowed, indeed, from the Platonists, is the beauty of virtue ---“ *Quæ si videri posset*, (as Tully renders it from Plato) *mirabiles excitaret Amores*.--”

BUT what are we to gather from all these founding expressions?--Why this truly, that, in the exercise and practise of *virtue*, we are to have no regard to *personal* happiness, to the feeling of any *present*, or prospect of *future* good; and whilst we are so ardently enamoured of that sublime *beauty*, the happiness of *others*, we must entirely overlook *our own*.

THIS, besides being a little enthusiastic, is really unphilosophical.---But when he adds--“ Men have made Virtue so *mercenary* “ a thing, and have talked so much of its “ *rewards*, that one can hardly tell what “ there is in it after all, which can be “ worth *rewarding* *.”--And again--“ If “ a *saint* had no other *virtue*, but what “ was raised in him by the objects of *re-* “ *ward* and *punishment* in a more distant “ state, I know not whose love or esteem “ he might gain, besides; but for my part, “ I should never think him worthy of “ mine †.”--Which free way of reasoning

* Essay on the *Freedom of Wit and Humour*, part. 2, sect. 3.

† Ibid. part 3, sect. 4.

the noble writer concludes with these words of Horace to his servant ;

*Nec furtum feci, nec fugi : (si mihi dicat
Servus ;) habes pretium ; loris non ureris, aio :
Non hominem occidi ;—Non pasces in cruce corvos.*
HOR. *Epist.* 16."

I neither *stole*, nor *fled*, (the servant cries)
—And thou'st escaped the *whip*, his Lord replies—
But, Sir, no *murder* to my charge is laid—
—The *gallows*, villain ! had thy *crime* repaid.—"

---WHEN the noble writer (I say) proceeds in this stile, it is no longer a philosophical truth we are concerned for ; but we begin to be alarmed for the fundamental doctrines of Christianity.

Now it is readily acknowledged, that we deserve neither *praise* nor *blame*, *reward* or *punishment*, for loving ourselves, and aspiring to be *happy* : for this is a natural and irresistible affection of the soul, which is *innate* with us. But how shall we be persuaded, that we do not deserve *reward* for the generous efforts we make ; or *punishment* for the base tergiversations we are guilty of, in the observance of our moral and religious *duties* ; i. e. in the execution of those means, which *reason* and *religion* prescribe as necessary to our own, and the public happiness ?---These are laws, which lay us under numberless re-

straints and *obligations*; and require frequent and daily acts, both of sufferance and forbearance. And in this it is, that our *obedience* is exercised, and put to the fairest test.

NOR is it left to our option what system of *gratification* we are to adopt and pursue. No: the indiscriminate gratification of *pleasure* is clearly forbid by these *primitive* rules; our *personal* happiness is by divine order inseparably connected with the *general* good; and in the observance, or neglect, of the duties prescribed to us for this great end, consists the *merit* of our obedience, or the *guilt* of our revolt.

OBEDIENCE, strictly speaking, is a due submission to the will of a *superior*, who has a right to *command*, and in whose power it is to reward (some way or other) the obedient, and punish the refractory. Now, is it not self-evident, that, by obeying the dictates of right reason, or the more immediate and significative intimations of the Divine will, we directly consult *our own*, nay our most essential and sovereign good? We hereby preclude the pangs of imbittering *remorse*, and secure *beatitude* in reversion.

If it be impossible for a *sensible* being, like *man*, to enter upon any course of *action* without the *feeling* of some immediate, or *prospect* of future good (and this, I

think, has been sufficiently demonstrated in the foregoing pages) why should it be deemed *culpable* in him to pursue a more enlarged plan of *good* and *happiness*?---Or what does this sublime Platonist mean; when he says, that “ If a *saint* had no “ other *virtue*, but what is raised in him “ by the objects of future *reward* or *punishment*, &c. for his part, he should not “ think him worthy his love, or esteem?”

THERE are many situations in life; and many particularities of temper in men; which render the general practice of Virtue extremely *difficult*; and under which it is happy for the world, that there is *any where* a motive to be found, capable of rousing the powers of action, and supporting men under such unfavourable circumstances in these laudable exertions.

Is the transition from an *avaricious* and *cruel* disposition to a generous and tender *fellow feeling*, so easy: or from a habit of *libertinism*, to temperance and decency of manners? Is there no difficulty in bearing up against a tide of misfortune and disgrace; In forgiving *injuries*; doing *good* for *evil*? &c.--Where is the *motive* to these inestimable, but arduous *virtues*, to be found?---In modern Platonism?---In the studied, and high flown strains of a secluded

contemplative, however eloquent and sublime?---Is the merit of *virtue* then to be denied all those, who have not the happiness of feeling so delicately, or expressing their feelings so eloquently, as my Lord Shaftesbury?--What must then become of the bulk of mankind?--Are they irrevocably condemned to *vice*, as well as *indelicacy* of taste, and language?

THIS is not in *nature*.--And the Author of nature, if he really meant that all should be *virtuous* and *happy*, must have supplied *motives* more within the reach of all. What are these?---Our *fears* and our *hopes*; the *denunciations*, and *promises* of futurity.

“ I KNOW (says this noble writer) that
“ the more *vulgar* of mankind stand in
“ need of such a rectifying object, as the
“ *gallows*, before their eyes. Yet I have
“ no belief, that any man of a liberal
“ education, or common honesty, ever
“ needed to have recourse to this idea, to
“ restrain him from playing the *knave*.”
But if his *lordship* had condescended to examine matters a little more attentively and impartially, he should have discovered, that men even of the most liberal education stand often in need of the same monitor: in a more exalted degree, if you will; but still a species of *gallows* in its kind: I mean

the *dread* of a *Supreme* judge, the apprehension of whose judgments may keep them in awe, and deter them from abusing the power, which is lodged in their hands, to the base and cruel purposes of tyranny and oppression.

THE result of this controversy is visibly this, that the idea of *reward* is essentially connected with that of *Virtue*, and *punishment* with that of *Vice*; nor is it possible to be virtuous *gratis*, or vicious with *impunity*: for either *Virtue* is in this life its own *reward*, as the mere Epicurean might have said; or God hath reserved a better reward in a future state, as *Christianity* better informs us.

INDEED, if a man refused to fulfill the obligations of his state without an assurance of such reward, as he should wantonly cut out for himself; or if not dragged to it by the apprehension of some punishment, not necessarily connected with the nature of his transgression; in such case, so far from deserving our esteem and approbation, I should readily agree, he rather deserved contempt and punishment.---A *patriot*, for instance, should be zealous in the cause of his country, without embroiling the nation, to force himself into a *lucrative* place; and a *witness* should adhere strictly to truth, and

avoid *perjury*, without fear of the *pillory*, or the apprehension of losing his *ears*. But where a man's *peace* in this world, and *happiness* in the next, are essentially connected with the general practice and love of Virtue, we must esteem him a *madman* to overlook, or neglect such motives; nor will any other ever make him uniformly *virtuous* and *honest*.

NOR is this reasoning in the least invalidated by the common observation, that these motives are not so generally the rule of men's actions, as *taste*, *humour*, *habit*, &c.---The reason of this is not in the *rule* itself, but in *men*, who will not attend to its direction, or think they have sufficiently complied with their duty, when from some impulse of this kind they have done some act of *good*, and perhaps, as Mr. Pope says,

—"Made a *widow* happy for a *whim*."

BUT in truth, is this Virtue; or, can *humour*, *habit*, or even *taste*, which the Platonists have dignified with the specious name of *moral sense*, be so solid and effectual a principle of *good*?---*Humour* is merely occasional, and always variable; *habit* is weakened by disuse, and entirely effaced by acts of an opposite tendency; the moral *taste*, or *sense*, which in fact means no more

than a certain *delicacy* of feeling, is not given to all, but peculiar to a happy few; and even these do not always turn it to the best advantage. What is there, we now ask, in all this, that should be deemed equal to the formation of a *constant, uniform, and general* principle? A principle, which should give *merit* to *humour* (if I may so express myself) *stability* to *habit*, and *universality* to the moral *sense* and *taste*?---*Religion* alone could have established such a principle in the human mind; because *religion* alone supplies motives proportionate and equal to these important effects.

ARE *motives*, like these, a disgrace to the *liberal* mind?--So my Lord Shaftesbury would have it.--If so, then has the admiration of so many ages been idly thrown away on the divine Plato; and Socrates himself must be deemed one of the most contemptible of men: for nothing did these philosophers inculcate more earnestly, than the alternative of *happiness* or *misery* in a future state. This is so frequently and so strenuously urged in Plato, that it is to me a matter of wonder how we can honour with the name of Platonists those modern philosophers, who will not permit us to act from motives so rational, and consonant to the principles of true Platonism.

TEMPER, i. e. the peculiar *character* of each individual, arising from temperament and constitution, is (would some other reasoners tell us) the only principle, by which men are influenced in their determinations, and the general conduct of life : a principle, which no discipline can change, or violence eradicate ; and which, after all the repeated efforts of *philosophy* and *reason*, returns always with redoubled force upon the man, who vainly imagined, that he had totally divested himself of it.---*Usque recurrit.*

BUT if we consider the matter attentively, we shall discover in the inference, intended from this observation, a visible and gross illusion.

TEMPER and constitution are neither the *motive* from which we act, nor the *rule* by which we are governed in our actions. Our immediate *motive* is always the *pleasure* found in the actual determination of the mind ; the *rule* by which we are governed, is *reason*, or the will of God manifested in some particular manner to us.---What part does *temper* and *character* act in this scene?---It facilitates the means of attaining what the *motive* leads to, and what the *rule* prescribes.

THERE is an infinite variety in the original formation of characters and tempers. By this, different men are naturally fitted to different impressions, different pleasures and pains, different labours and occupations. Among these last, that which we naturally find most pleasure and delight in, generally succeeds best, because it coincides most with the natural temper and character, and has always fresh supplies and reinforcements at hand from Nature; and as this grand coalition, called the human *society*, necessarily requires an infinite variety of occupations and employments, different characters and tempers were therefore given to men, to enable them to carry on the various and complicate business of life.

BUT what consequence are we to draw from all this, for the decision of the question now before us? In other words, how far is *character* and *temper* to be judged to enter into the principle of human action? ---No farther, it is plain, than as a secondary cause, or instrument; which, when it coincides with the intention of the *rational* agent, facilitates the execution of his design, and makes the business go on smooth and easy; when it draws in an opposite line, retards, and renders more slow and difficult, the accomplishment of the

work.---But are there no sources, from which we may draw the helps we want, on such occasions? Yes: those of sound *reason* and *religion* lye open to us: from these we draw succours unknown to the *mechanism* of constitution and temper: that is, from these sources we draw *motives* accommodated to the superior powers of the soul; *reflection*, *hope*, love of *immortality*, and true *glory*---These nobler powers of the soul can only be properly exercised and set in motion (with the generality of mankind) by the motives of *reward* or *punishment* in a more distant state.

WHAT we have here observed on the subject of personal *character* and *temper*, may seem perhaps more properly to concern Doctor Mandeville's whimsical and extravagant positions in his *Fable of the Bees*.---But of him more, immediately.---As to *temper* in general, let it be here remarked once for all, that its proper use, in the *physical* order, is to fit different subjects for different occupations in life; and in the *moral*, to give its peculiar stamp, or character, to the common virtues of men.---Thus, in persons of a mild and gentle disposition, Virtue is generally *inoffensiveness*, *clemency*, love of *contemplation*, &c. in the ardent and irascible, it is *zeal*, and

strictness of discipline: in the bold, it is *fortitude*; and, in the tender and compassionate, *liberality*, and universal *benevolence*.

BUT all these virtues may be acquired and supported in opposition even to *temper* and the natural *character*.---Thus, from the influence of superior motives (as those of a *future state*) the *hard-hearted* and *avaricious* may become benevolent and liberal; the *timid*, firm and resolute; the *indolent*, laborious and zealous; and the *ardent* and *irascible*, gentle and meek. Such the power, and superiority of these motives, which my Lord Shaftesbury treats with so much contempt! and such the excellency of *religion*, in comparison to what is called *humour*, *habit*, *taste*, or even *temper*, and the natural *character* of men!

WHY then should we reject a principle, which we see so universally prevalent in nature? If every voluntary act of the soul necessarily implies, and carries along with it a feeling of *pleasure* and *complacency*; and if the desire of *happiness* is really inseparable from our nature, why should we blush to say, that Virtue has always *personal* good in view, or that this is the *motive*, which engages the mind in the concerns of the *public* weal? Our zeal for the general cause

must immediately cease and die away, if not constantly supported by this *personal* consideration; or if we cease but for a moment to feel for *ourselves*.

THE higher, therefore, this sentiment of Self is raised in us, the more must Virtue itself flourish--Virtue, I say, *public* as well as *private*--and the wider the circle, in which Self-Love is made to move, the more conspicuous will its general utility appear. Can the mind act without *motive*, or its *impulsive* cause? And if the idea of *futurity* brings an accession of weight to every other impulse of the mind, how great the folly, and how ridiculous the enthusiasm of that philosophy, which would teach us to reject or overlook it.

“ To talk, therefore, of the *truth*, *harmony*, and *beauty* of Virtue, exclusive of its consequences to the *individual* agent, is (I shall venture to say with the author of the *Free-Enquiry* into the Nature and Origin of *Evil*) but pompous nonsense.” All these things are, in fact, *relative* to the mind, and the production of *personal*, as well as *public* happiness. This alone it is, with regard to the *individual*, that makes truth preferable to falsehood; that constitutes the harmony, and forms the beauty of Virtue: And this is the reality of that allegorical

beauty so finely imagined by Plato.---*Quæ, si videri posset, mirabiles excitaret et amores.*---

I CANNOT dismiss this subject without transcribing here a most elegant and beautiful *simile*, with which Dr. Brown illustrates the truth we have here established.

“ THERE are few (says he) among man-
 “ kind, who have not been struck with
 “ admiration at the sight of that variety of
 “ colours, and magnificence of form, which
 “ appear in an evening *rainbow*. The un-
 “ instructed in philosophy consider that
 “ splendid object not as *dependent* on any
 “ other, but as being possessed of a *self-*
 “ *given* and *original* beauty : but he, who
 “ is led to know, that its place and ap-
 “ pearance always *varies* with the situation
 “ of the sun ; that when the latter is in
 “ his meridian, the former becomes an
 “ inconsiderable *curve*, skirting the hori-
 “ zon ; that as the sun descends, the
 “ *rainbow* rises ; till, at the time of his
 “ setting, it encompasses the heavens with
 “ a glorious *circle*, yet dies away, when
 “ he disappears ; the enquirer is then con-
 “ vinced, that this gay *meteor* did but
 “ shine with a *borrowed* splendor, derived
 “ from the influence of that mighty lu-
 “ minary---. Thus, in like manner, tho’
 “ the *beauty, fitness, truth, &c.* of all

“ those actions, which we term *morally*
“ good, seem at first view to reside in the
“ several actions in an original, and inde-
“ pendent manner; yet on a nearer scru-
“ tiny we shall find, that, properly speak-
“ ing, their nature ariseth from their *ends*
“ and *consequences*; that as these *vary*, the
“ nature of the several actions *varies* with
“ them; that from these alone, actions
“ gain their *splendor*, are denominated *mo-*
“ *rally* good, and give the ideas of *beauty*,
“ *fitness*, *truth*, or *virtue*.---”

LET it not, however, be here imagined, that I would shut up to the *generous* mind those natural sources of satisfaction and enjoyment, which seem to constitute its peculiar happiness. Let the noble and elevated soul enjoy the sublime bliss of doing *good* purely, if you will, for the sake of *good* itself: let each one indulge this useful enthusiasm, as far as it will carry him. But is that, indeed, so very far?---Does this sublime *motive* rule essentially in every degree, or species of *Virtue*? I doubt whether its influence reaches much farther than to acts of *beneficence* and *clemency*, and such like virtues, whose natural reward is concomitant and inseparable from the act itself. The internal and immediate resources of the very best mind are

not, we may boldly say, equal to every trial, every call of Virtue; and help must be called in, from whatever quarter it may come.---Why should we then refuse the succours and resources, which *religion* presents in such cases?---That, indeed, were straining Platonism far beyond the powers of nature; and, I am certain, the intention of Plato himself: but, what is still more seriously to be considered, this arrogance of mind, this haughty reserve, which would make us refuse the succours offered by religion, merely because we did not find them in *ourselves*, and that they are not of our own fund and growth, must be highly injurious to the Author of all *good*, whose dispensations we thereby reject, and whose gifts we despise.

C H A P. XII.

General reflections and maxims on the subject of Virtue.---Contrast between modern Epicureans and modern Platonists.

IF Virtue is the study of true *happiness*, then every action, which tends not to the production of happiness, however bril-

liant it may appear, and whatever difficulties the execution of it may be attended with, falls infinitely short of that godlike character.

ALEXANDER undoubtedly displayed great valour and capacity in the conquest of Asia; so did Cæsar in oppressing Rome: but why should the one disturb the peace of so many nations; or the other enslave his country?---Who can refuse his admiration to the intrepidity and conduct of Fer. Cortez in the conquest of a new world? But when we see the sensible and generous Montezuma loaded with chains in his own palace, or bleeding on the walls of Mexico, in the view of so many thousands of his subjects, that adored him; can we forbear wishing to see Cortez crushed under the general ruins?

SCIPIO appears the highest character in the annals of Rome. Magnanimity, justice, valour, military skill, moderation; all united to form that greatest of the Romans. His person, noble and graceful--his manners, delicate and chaste--his affability, enchanting--all this at the age of four and twenty! Was ever man happier in *himself*, or better fitted to make *others* so?--But his attachment to Virtue was founded on stronger motives than those proposed by my Lord

Shaftesbury. This appears in the only answer he deigned to return to the unjust charges made upon him by some of his enemies, before the Roman people:--Come, said he, *my countrymen! on such a day as this I vanquished Hannibal: follow me to the Capitol, to return thanks to the Gods.*--Was so exalted a mind insensible to the motives of *futurity*, the love of *immortality*, &c.

WHEN the mind is once satisfied of the reality of a *future* state, Virtue seems to flow spontaneous, and we easily flatter ourselves that we love Virtue purely for Virtue's sake.--But let the mind once begin to doubt of the reality of that state; how gloomy the prospect all round us; and how feeble the resources that remain to Virtue! Then it is that the fond illusion, like the colours of the *rainbow*, dies away; and we quickly perceive that we must lay hold on some meaner, that is, *earthly* and *perishable*, objects to support the faint efforts it may be still in our thoughts to make.--Virtue, in that supposition, can be no more than a natural desire of protracting life, securing to ourselves its enjoyments, and living with honour and the esteem of the world,---

WHAT is there desirable or amiable in Virtue, if it tends not to make *me happy*? And should not the interests of society, &c. appear quite indifferent and foreign to me, if I could become at any time insensible to *my own happiness* and *safety*?---Who feels not for *himself*, will feel much less for *others*.

---But a good mind is sufficiently happy in the *virtuous consciousness*?---I cannot think so: nor will the best mind, that exists, spontaneously shut up the avenues to further bliss.---“Agreed (says my Lord Shaftesbury at last) provided this be confined to the *virtuous enjoyment*, and the *progressive* pleasure of doing good.”

BUT why should we confine the idea of *bliss* to what this noble writer is pleased to call *virtuous enjoyment*? That is, in his sense, the *progressive pleasure* of doing good?---The enjoyment of consummate *bliss* in another state, exempt from the labour and pain which is annexed here to the practice of virtue, and with only a consciousness and remembrance of having merited that happiness, gives still a fuller idea of *virtuous enjoyment* than that mentioned by his *Lordship*. Why should we not then pursue an object so rational, and desirable? and, if true *virtuous enjoyment* was what he solely meant to establish, why

was he so angry on this head with the Christian institution, which gives a much fuller and nobler scope to that sentiment, than we can see in any thing he has been able to advance?---

WHY do we say that the generality of mankind are not capable of Virtue on the terms of modern Platonism?---For this very obvious reason, that they can find no immediate pleasure, no charms in *moral* discipline, independently of its *end* and *consequences*.---And why this again? Because the more general sources of *pleasure* in men are the senses, the imagination, and the passions.

WHERE the pleasures of *sense* predominate, not only there appears no beauty or harmony in the abstract idea of Virtue; but, as Dr. Brown very well observes, the *imagination* itself is dull and heavy, and the *passions* inactive. In the gratifications of *sense* and *appetite*, such characters are sagacious and keen; but to a taste for the fine arts, *music, painting, architecture, poetry*, &c. or the sublime feelings of *public* affection, they are utterly insensible.---

“ They seem in a manner unconnected with the rest of their kind; and view the praises, censures, enjoyments, or sufferings of others, with an eye of perfect indifference.”

IN men of *imagination*, the *senses* are disregarded, or considered but as the first outlets to *pleasure*; "A more delicate frame awakens the powers of *fancy*; the taste runs into the more elegant refinements of the polite arts; or, in defect of this truer taste, on the false delicacies of dress, furniture, equipage, &c."

WHERE the *passions* predominate, *hope* or *fear*, *candour* or *disimulation*, *generosity* or *selfishness*, *love* or *hatred*; here generally the *senses* are overlooked; or, "Both the *senses* and the *imagination* become, no more than the necessary instruments to some further gratification.--A various mixture or combination of these is undoubtedly the most common temperature of human kind."

THESE different dispositions in men seem to afford no great motive to the love of Virtue. The slaves to *sense* naturally look no higher than the brute kind; these are the *animal* men of *St. Paul*, 1 Cor. 2, 14. Again, the admirer of the fine arts may be engaged in all the refined pleasures of *imagination*, without ever considering them as the means of giving *pleasure* to others, or contributing to the *happiness* of mankind, but merely as a *selfish* gratification; nor is there any necessary connexion be-

tween these feelings. Those, lastly, who are under the natural dominion and influence of the *passions*, if they be of the *bad* kind (as *hatred, jealousy, anger, revenge*) have surely no immediate natural motives to Virtue, and are very distant from that high *moral taste* and *sense*, which, according to the modern Platonists, is alone capable of giving a relish for Virtue.

TAKE men even in the common run, and as they are for the most part formed, that is, made up of a various mixture or combination of the *passions*, the *public* affections and generous concern for the common *weal* seem not to make the predominant ingredient of such characters; and they must be in a manner bribed into schemes of *public* utility by views of some immediate, or private advantage.--You may as well tell me, that a man, who has received from nature no genius for *poetry*, may become a *poet*; or that he who has no natural taste for *painting*, may rise to be a *Painter*; as that men, formed like these, are capable of a generous and firm attachment to Virtue, without the assistance of *motives* superior to this Platonic taste, or any thing they can find in themselves.

I KNOW Rochefoucault says, "that
" Virtue would not go so far, if *vanity* did

"not bear her company--" *Tolle ambitionem, et fastuosos spiritus*, says Seneca, *nullos habebis nec Platones, nec Catones, nec Scævolas, nec Scipiones, nec Fabricios.*—Strip men of their ambition and vanity, and you will have no *heroes* or *patriots*.

BUT I fancy this kind of *vanity* is not to be discouraged. That high spirit and elevation of soul, which seeks for applause in actions of the most extensive public utility, is literally the "*Laudum immensa Cupido*," by which the immortal Virgil characterises his heroes. We must nevertheless acknowledge, that the love of popularity is often a dangerous passion; and the ambition becoming a hero, is principally that of *conscious* self-approbation and applause.

THE word *vanity*, in the sense of modern Epicureans, is indeed degrading, and a species of philosophical detraction. With them it is mere love of *popularity*, or an extravagant passion for *admiration*, which is not confined to the commander or statesman, but affects equally the candidates to every degree of excellency, or merit. Public virtue, therefore, say these philosophers, is nothing more than the love of praise and admiration!--And the imposing name of Virtue, but a lure held out by the wise to

bribe the *vain* into schemes of *public* good and utility!

BUT this is wretched sophistry.--To the truly *virtuous* man, the love of *praise* is no more than a desire of having his actions and sentiments interpreted and received, in the same light and spirit, he originally conceived them. The approbation of the good and wise is a pleasing circumstance; because it confirms to him the opinion he had formed to himself, of the rectitude and dignity of his actions. Should his intentions be misinterpreted, through malice or mistake, he calmly retires within himself, where he finds sufficient resources to enable him to proceed in the path of virtue and true glory, though the world should remain silent to his praise, or even pay his services with ingratitude. This is true greatness of soul, and the highest step in the scale of virtue. Socrates points it out as its surest and noblest characteristic.--Will our modern reasoners pretend that the human mind is not capable of so much elevation?--A little experience and acquaintance with certain grand characters in moral life, would soon undeceive them; and demonstrate the falsity of so injurious a supposition. What must we then think of all their wretched discourses, and in-

sinuations, calculated purely to cry down and dishonour virtue?--Yes: Self-approbation must necessarily accompany conscious virtue: nor can this subsist without it.-- The love, even of honest fame, is not incompatible with this sentiment: and that species of *vanity* which seeks for applause without any just title to it; or which, if not gratified, should cause our virtuous purposes to stand still, or vanish; should alone be deemed contrary to, and irreconcilable with, the idea of true virtue.

UPON the whole, therefore, the virtuous sentiment is evidently independent of all those secondary or instrumental causes, *temper, habit, taste, vanity*, and the like; because it is founded on motives apparently distinct from them all, and capable of affecting universally every character. For who is there in the world, that does not lye open to the impressions of *hope* and *fear*, inseparable always from the idea of *futurity*?--And under the influence of such powerful motives, which receive still an immense accession of strength from the greatness of their objects in the Christian revelation, what efforts is not human nature capable of, and equal to?--Had Mandeville and Helvetius been willing to give the proper attention to these obvious con-

siderations, neither the *fable* of the *bees*, nor that rank compound of paradox and materialism, entitled *l'esprit*, had ever seen the light.--How much sophistical and insidious reasoning had been then suppressed!--How much idle and impertinent declamation spared the public!

Of all the philosophical sects, that of the Stoics is esteemed to have produced the greatest number of patriots, and illustrious men. This may appear wonderful, as their opinions were for the most part unnatural, and apparently absurd. It is true, they made VIRTUE to consist in living according to *nature* and *reason*. But how did they interpret *nature*?--How did they understand *reason*?---According to them, "The WISE MAN was a kind of independent being: he was all; he had all within himself: no passions to gratify; no wants to supply; no misery or weakness to labour under: he was incapable of receiving hurt, or injury from any accident: and rather than acknowledge the possibility of this, they would have maintained that there was no *evil* in the world; or, at least, that *pain* and the most excruciating torments were, in reality, no *evil*." This was abundantly sufficient to feed the pride, and in-

flame the enthusiasm, of the haughty philosopher. It might, therefore, have produced *patriots*; men who were indeed the admiration of their age, and always ready to sacrifice their own ease and repose to the consideration of the public good. But it never produced a man of real VIRTUE; a man capable of facing adversity in all its various and discouraging appearances; and both Cato and Brutus gave, in the last period of life, the most striking proofs of the inanity and ridicule of this arrogant philosophy.

WE have already exhibited a picture of Cato in the last scene of life. Brutus, who like him was a professed Stoic, and commonly stiled the *last* of the Romans, betrayed the same weakness and despondency after the ruin of the Republican party in the plains of Philippi. What can be more singular than the manner in which he there apostrophizes VIRTUE?---
Te colui; Virtus! ut rem; est tu nomen inane es:---“ I have been attached to thee,
 “ O VIRTUE! as something solid and real;
 “ but now I perceive thou art but a name,
 “ and an unmeaning sound.” Saying this, he fell upon his sword, and expired.---
 The unnatural system he had adopted,

could afford no real comfort to a man of sensibility in that critical situation.

It now evidently appears, that the true idea of Virtue necessarily implies these three things : first---a readiness to undertake great and difficult matters ; secondly, a view to the general good ; lastly, a deep and real sense of our own weakness, dependency, and wants, which should keep us always in mind of the middle rank, in which Nature hath placed us: above that of the brute kind, indeed, which are governed by mere instinct ; and yet below that of pure spiritual beings, which are exempt from the infirmities and imperfections of our inferior nature.---For want of paying the proper attention to this necessary subordination, the virtue of the Stoics was but an imposing cant, which could not stand the assaults of adversity and disappointment ; but, in these critical trials had always recourse to *suicide*, and the destruction of that being, which true Virtue should have taught them rather to cherish and support, whilst Providence was pleased to leave them in the possession of it. Plato compares a man under the general embarrassments of life, and particularly in cases of extraordinary trial and adversity, to a centinel on his post ; from

which he is not to depart, until called away by superior order.

As to the other two necessary conditions of Virtue, "A readiness to undertake
"great and arduous matters, and a view
"to the public good;" we shall here observe, first, that virtue always implies some sacrifice, some struggle, or violence done ourselves. Thus true *clemency*, for example, always supposes a generous sacrifice of that fullen but keen pleasure, which accompanies the gratification of revenge: in this it is the merit of forgiveness consists; and true magnanimity, founded in religion, can alone dictate this sentiment. But we often lay aside our resentments (says Rochefoucault) from mere *vanity*, and a desire of displaying a nobleness of soul, which we are very distant from: sometimes from *indolence*, and an impatience to be delivered from that disturbed and uneasy state of mind, which always accompanies the sense of an *injury*; sometimes again from *fear*, and an inability of gratifying our resentment; and almost always from a mixture of all these inferior motives; which, as they suppose no real victory over the *passion* itself (for this may still remain in its full strength and rancour upon the mind) can communicate no degree of *virtue* or *merit*

to that external suspension of revenge, which passes in the eyes of the world for clemency and forgiveness.--The truly virtuous are always on their guard against these false appearances of virrue.

SECONDLY, We may undergo great difficulties and hardships in the prosecution of our designs; but if this is merely for our own immediate gratification, without any regard to the public good, it can never establish a claim to *virtue*. We have seen this already exemplified in Alexander, Cæsar, Cortez, and all those wild conquerors, who, for the sake of establishing a great name, or from an insatiable desire of adding to their dominions, make no scruple of invading the liberties of mankind, at the hazard often of their own lives, and always of their quiet and ease. These enterprizing men, indeed, never fail to cover their destructive views with the specious pretext of the public good; that is, of securing the glory and happiness of their own nation and state: and we must own, it is not always easy to determine how far the laws of national safety may countenance this plea; but is it just to trample on the rights and liberties of our neighbours, merely to aggrandize ourselves?---Are princes and states dispensed by nature from

those general duties and obligations to each other, which individuals, in their way, owe to individuals?--“ We kings (said “ Henry the Fourth of France) are indeed “ great r----s.” *Nous autres rois, nous sommes de grands coquins.*

BUT political considerations come not within our sphere.--We should be here mere moralists, and this is what alone concerns the individuals of our species, for whom we write. We shall therefore conclude these reflexions with a comparison, or rather contrast, between the modern Epicureans and modern Platonists, those undertakers of morality, who have so long engaged our attention in this work.-- This curious passage is taken from Dr. Brown.

HE begins by observing, that whilst moralists have been enquiring into human happiness, they have generally considered it as arising from one *uniform* and *particular* source, instead of tracing it up to those various fountains, whence it really springs; which are indefinitely various, combined and indeterminable; and this, says he, seems to have been the most general foundation of *error*.

“ Thus, most of the Epicurean sect, “ though not the founder of it, have

“ discarded *benevolence* and *virtue* from
“ their system of private happiness. The
“ modern patronizers of this scheme, Mr.
“ Hobbes, Dr. Mandeville, and several
“ French writers, after heaping up a col-
“ lection of sordid instances, which prove
“ the sensual inclinations and *selfishness* of
“ man, leap at once to their desired con-
“ clusion: that the pretended *public* affec-
“ tions are therefore no more than the same
“ low passions in disguise; that *benevolence*
“ makes no part of man’s nature; that the
“ human kind are absolutely unconnected
“ with each other in point of affection;
“ and that every individual seeks and finds
“ his *private* happiness in and from--him-
“ self alone.”

“ My Lord Shaftesbury, on the contrary,
“ viewing the brighter parts of human
“ nature through the amiable medium of
“ the Socratic philosophy, and fixing his
“ attention on the *public* affections, as the
“ instruments both of *public* and *private*
“ happiness, rejects the Epicureans pre-
“ tentions with disdain; and fully conscious
“ of the high claims and energy of *virtue*,
“ affirms that the *private* affections are,
“ by no means, a foundation for *private*
“ happiness; that there is no other source
“ of happiness or gratification to indi-

“viduals, but that of universally promot-
 “ing the welfare of others; and that in
 “every case, virtue is the only *good*, and
 “vice the only *ill* of every one.”

“THIS strange opposition of sentiments
 “seems to have arisen not from a *false*, but
 “a *partial* view of the subject. The
 “Platonic party (as formerly the Stoics)
 “dwell altogether on the *social* or *public*;
 “the Epicurean no less on the *private* or
 “*selfish*, affections: on these respectively
 “they declaim; so that, according to the
 “one, mankind are naturally a race of
 “*demi-gods*; according to the other, a
 “crew of *devils*. Both forgetting what
 “is unquestionably the truth, that these
 “*social* and *private* affections are blended
 “in an endless variety of degrees; and thus
 “form an infinite variety of inclinations
 “and characters -- It should therefore ap-
 “pear, that while the patronizers of these
 “two systems have attempted to give a
 “general picture of the human species,
 “they have all along taken the copy from
 “themselves: and thus their philosophy,
 “instead of being a true history of *nature*,
 “is no more than the history of their own
 “*imaginations* or *affections*.”

THE true system of *nature* lies in a
 medium between these two; and is plainly

that, which we have been endeavouring to illustrate; and set forth all along in this work. Human nature is manifestly furnished with *private* as well as *public* affections. These lend mutual strength and support to each other; and in the wise and rational direction of these affections, consists the true science of happiness and virtue.--To what extremes have not the patronizers of these opposite sentiments carried their reasonings?--According to Dr. Mandeville, the *private* affections are not only the source, whence every *public* affection springs; but even private *vices* are public *benefits*, and consequently real sources of public *happiness*: and this he has the confidence to set forth in the very title-page of his book.--If such the fruits of *private* vice, what character is left to *private* virtue?--Is it not evident, either that it must be considered as productive of public *mischief*; or that it has no permanent character at all? And thus we must either confound, or absolutely annihilate the eternal ideas of virtue and vice, and of right and wrong. On the contrary, my Lord Shaftesbury is so extremely partial to the *public* affections, that he absolutely condemns as base, mercenary, and unworthy an honest man, any regard to *personal* future happiness in the

love and practise of virtue.--How miserably is virtue and human nature made to fluctuate between these opposite and jarring opinions!

BUT the most savoury and piquant part of the contrast is yet to come.--“ It is
“ well known (continues our judicious
“ essayist), that the writer of the *Fable* of
“ the *Bees* was neither a saint in his life,
“ nor a hermit in his diet. He seems to
“ have been master of a very considerable
“ sagacity; much knowledge of the world,
“ as it appears in populous cities; and ex-
“ tremely sensible to all the grosser bodily
“ enjoyments: but for a delicacy of senti-
“ ment, imagination, or passion; for an
“ exquisite taste either in *arts* or *morals*,
“ he appears to have been incapable of it.
“ ---The noble writer is known to have
“ been of a frame the very reverse of this.--
“ His constitution was neither more nor
“ less opposite to Dr. Mandeville’s, than
“ his philosophy. His sensual appetites
“ were weak; his imagination all alive,
“ noble and capacious: his passions were
“ accordingly refined, and his *public* affec-
“ tions (in *fancy* at least) predominant.---
“ Among the Epicureans we ever find men
“ of high health, florid complexions, firm
“ nerves, and a capacity for *pleasure*. Of

" the Platonic and Stoic party are the
 " delicate, or sickly frames; men incapable
 " of the grosser sensual enjoyments; and
 " who either are, or think themselves,
 " *virtuous*.--Now, from these accumulated
 " proofs, we may be convinced, that they,
 " who would give us these *uniform* pictures
 " of a subject so *various* as mankind, can-
 " not have drawn them from *nature*; that,
 " on the contrary, they have copied them
 " from their own *hearts* or *imaginations*, and
 " fondly erected themselves into a general
 " standard of the *human* species."--The
 Christian morality alone is suited to every
 temper, every character, every capacity;
 because its end and design is *private* as well
 as *public* happiness.

BUT if virtue has this determined and
 known standard, how comes it (says Dr.
 Mandeville; and this is the last objection
 of his that I shall take any notice of) that
 all nations and ages are not agreed in the
 particular maxims and doctrines of *mo-
 rality*?--How comes it that, among the
 Mahometans, a multiplicity of *wives* is
 maintained as a laudable institution; whilst
 it is condemned among us, as contrary even
 to the law of *nature*? or, that the Indian
 nations, and even the Chinese, think it just
 and warrantable to dispatch an infirm and

decrepit *parent*, or a deformed *child*, whilst we think it a duty to cherish and comfort *both*?--“ Is there, in short (to use “ his own words) any greater certainty “ in *morals*, than in the ways of laying “ out a *garden* judiciously; which are al- “ most innumerable, because they *vary* “ according to the different *tastes* of nations “ and ages?”

HERE is a piece of sophistry, the most capable of imposing on weak minds; because it is in a matter the most obvious, and within the reach of every capacity.-- It were perhaps in vain, and may look like begging the question to say, that it belongs to the wisdom of God alone to determine the propriety and *moral* rectitude of our actions in all those cases, where human judgements differ; and that we have the sanction of the *divine* authority on our side. To drop therefore this plea, however just and reasonable in itself, it must, I think, be agreed, that the art of laying out a garden judiciously (which is Dr. Mandeville's favourite *simile*) consists in directing the whole to the purpose of *utility* and *delight*: this last is often the only end proposed in these productions of art; and where this effect appears, the end of the cultivator is fully answered.

BUT what is the end and design of *mortality*?--Is it to feed the wandering eye of an imperious sultan with the daily view of three or four hundred of the finest women in the world, doomed all, a few favorites excepted, to the excruciating pangs of ever returning jealousy and despair? A voluntary abdication of the sensual enjoyments may be supported with firmness, and without a sigh: the occasions of natural incitement may be avoided, and the mind engaged in the sublimer exercises of religious charity, and contemplative love. Who sees not, how very distant the condition of a *seraglio* is from this voluntary renouncement? and how the design, even of *nature*, in the lawful multiplication of the species (an object, which I believe Mandeville would have paid much more attention to) is by this tyrannic *monopoly* totally frustrated?--The practice of destroying a decrepit *parent*, or a deformed *child*, is not less contrary to the known design or end of *mortality*; i. e. to the object of the general good. That deformed child may be born with a mind, and genius capable, of doing honour to humanity.--Must all these hopes be blasted in the very bud of life; for a distorted limb, or an irregular feature? On the other hand, is a person,

that has deserved so well of us, as a *parent*, to be cruelly deprived of his existence, which however imbittered by sickness and infirmity, has yet it's comforts and intervals of enjoyment.

If the nations that practise these barbarities, do not, or will not see into their enormity, and manifest deviation from the known rule of *moral* rectitude, is it the less true, that they are in themselves condemnable, and immoral ; or does it follow from thence, that there is no real standard of Virtue, and *moral truth* ; or that its maxims can boast no greater permanency and stability, than the modes and fashions, that come and go in endless rotation ? We have known novices in philosophy to blush for mistakes in reasoning, less gross, and palpable, than this of the great Dr. Mandeville's,---

C O N C L U S I O N.

WE have then, at length, bid *adieu* to the philosophers ; and extricated ourselves from that perplexing labyrinth of reasoning, or rather, philosophical reverie, which seems to have distracted the judgments of the present age, and warped the mind from its true and natural bias, to the love of paradox, deception, and error.

. M

How easily youth may be seduced into the pleasing, but pernicious scheme of *happiness*, proposed by so many of these modern reasoners, we need take no pains to demonstrate. It were perhaps more to the purpose to lament, with all thinking men, the rapid progress, which this way of thinking has of late years made among the *youth* of almost every nation in Europe: for this century seems to have been the reign of libertine writers, and free-thinkers; who, under the disguise of *essayists*, *philosophers*, and true friends to *humanity*, have seriously laboured to debauch mankind from the salutary paths of *virtue*, and *religion*, to a philosophical indifference, and contempt of all that has been held *sacred* by the wisdom of ages.---Gay *meteors*! which hold out a dazzling, but deceitful light; that pleases only to lead the mind astray, and shines but to disappear the next moment.

“ DEISTS (says a very late and eminent writer *) while they have expressed the
 “ highest veneration and respect for *re-*
 “ *velation*, have taken infinite pains to
 “ undermine and expose it by oblique
 “ and covert ways. Nothing but the
 “ caprice of *mode*, and an unaccountable

* *The Author of Clio, or a Discourse on Taste.*

“ blindness, that attends a present mode,
 “ could hinder them from observing the
 “ unworthiness of their conduct, and the
 “ baseness of mind they betray.---In this
 “ tract of duplicity, and prostitution of
 “ heart, have trod Hobbes, Shaftesbury,
 “ Bolingbroke, and some authors, French,
 “ and English, now alive.---The strange
 “ manner and artifice of these writers at
 “ first surprise; but the human heart,
 “ that naturally detests dishonesty, refuses
 “ them *fame*; and in half an age they
 “ are considered only as the patrons of li-
 “ centiousness; and to make their infamy
 “ remarkable, they are only remembered
 “ and honoured by the *vicious*.”

It is indeed, impossible to observe the progression of the mind in the formation of the *moral* principle, and not be filled with the highest reverence and awe at the idea of the *Supreme Being*, whose presence fills, whose glory encompasses the soul; and whose authority alone can enforce an implicit obedience to the internal dictates of *virtue*. We feel the majesty, and I may say, the divinity of *virtue* in three distinct ways:

FIRST, by *sentiment*, or that inward taste of pure *delight* and *joy*, which accompanies the sincere practice of it, and de-

164 RATIONAL SELF-LOVE.

monstrates it's conformity with *rational* nature, and the blessed all-ruling *mind* :

SECONDLY, by a clear and forcible deduction of *reasoning* through a long chain of evident consequences, as has been pointed out in the foregoing sheets :

LASTLY, by faith, and a truly reasonable submission to, and acquiescence in the *word* of God, clearly revealed, and announced to us ; that irrefragable and sovereign rule, which removes all our doubts, fixes immovably the standard of *moral* rectitude, enlarges and strengthens our hope, distinctly points out the path in which we are to walk, and leads us, as it were by the hand, to *immortality* and *glory*. And to this unerring rule alone, we must own ourselves indebted for our superiority, above the *ancients*, in the doctrine of *morals*.



T H E E N D.